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VOLUME 2
ISSUE 4

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

Gex
Groovy Gecko
Smashing Sequel Baby

Get Down and Funky With

Gex

Deep Cover Gecko

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine Issue 16 (January 1999)

January 1999
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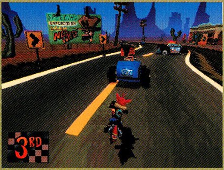
THAT’S ABOUT ALL



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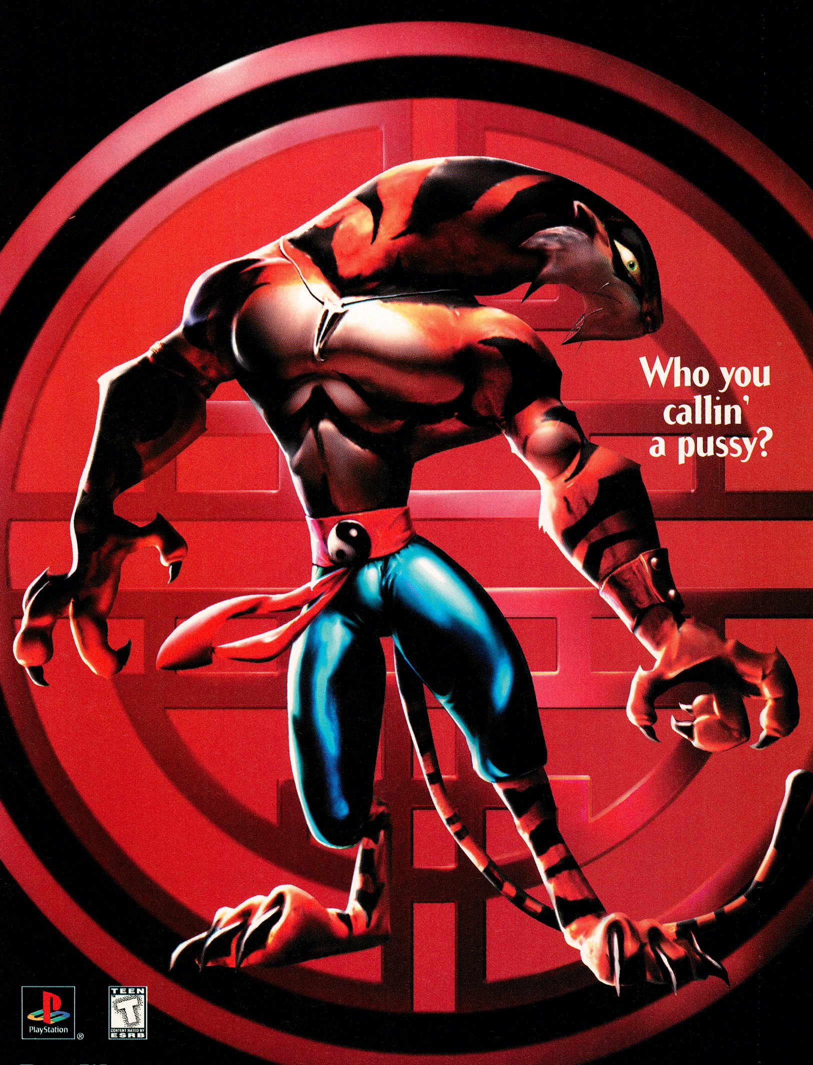

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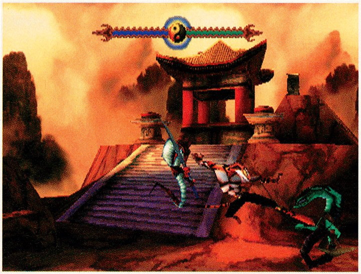

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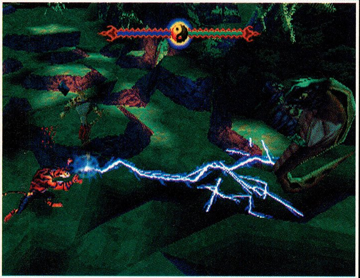

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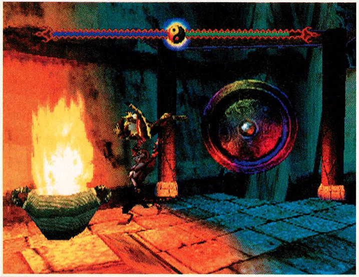

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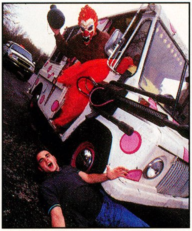
A few unofficial words from the official editor-in-chief



Trust me. I promise that it is only a coincidence that I wrote this editorial concerning sequels after Sweet Tooth ran me over and then attempted to shove a bomb down my throat.

Don't Expect Many 3's To Be Followed By 4's

After a sequel-heavy 1998, I'm more than ready for some original games. Sure, 1998 gave us Metal Gear Solid and a handful of other unique titles, but it also gave us a lot of titles with the number 3 attached to them (including our cover story, Gex). This is not to say that these sequels are bad—most of them are actually pretty good, but there needs to be more big-budget original titles. The good news is that there's a significant chance that 1999 will deliver just that. But why?

The biggest reason is that the developers who have worked on these franchises for the past few years are ready to shift gears. After chatting with a lot of development teams over the past few months, I got the sense that many were ready to move on to other things. Who can blame them? They made great games because they have a passion for them, and improving upon a proven formula two or three times just isn't going to satisfy that passion. I am almost certain that if you see another Crash Bandicoot or Tomb Raider on the current PlayStation hardware, it won't be from the same development team (although Lara will resurface in Eidos' upcoming Witchblade game next year). The only thing that might make these same developers drool over rendling old flames is the prospect of new hardware. But the PlayStation 2 is still pretty far away.

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The Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine is the only Sony Computer Entertainment America-licensed magazine and is published by ZD Inc. through an exclusive arrangement. As such, *OPM* remains independent from SCEA, and is a critical, autonomous voice that helps readers get more out of their PlayStation system by delivering the most current, comprehensive and candid coverage of PlayStation software and hardware.

Also consider that there just isn't a whole lot of room to improve many of the existing franchises—especially the great ones. The PlayStation still has some untapped power, but most gamers just aren't going to be satisfied with a few new changes to their favorite game every year (with the exception of sports titles). If they start to make too many sequels in a small period of time, companies run the risk of saturating the market and burning out the franchises they covet so much. There aren't too many companies dumb enough to do that.

What this all boils down to is that any game whose name has a 3 at the end of it most likely won't have a sequel with a 4 on it anytime soon. Also, a lot of the developers that were saddled making sequels will probably (fingers crossed) create all-new games to woo us with. We're already hearing whispers of fresh titles being in the works, but we might have to wait until around May for the E3 trade show to see if 1999 will indeed be a year of renewed originality.

Kraig Kujawa
Editor in Chief

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine (ISSN #1094-6683) is published monthly by ZD Inc., 1920 Highland Ave., 2nd Floor, Lombard, IL 60148. Periodicals Postage Pending at Lombard, IL and additional mailing offices. Single-issue rates: $7.99. Subscription Rates: One Year (12 issues and 12 demo discs) $39.97 U.S., $65.97 all other countries. We periodically make lists of our customers available to mailers of goods and services. If you do not wish to receive such mailings, please write to us and include a copy of your mailing label. Subscription Service Questions and Address Changes Write to: Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine, P.O. Box 55362, Boulder, CO 80322-5362. Call us: (303)665-8930 U.S. or (303)604-7445 all other countries. Fax us: (303)604-7455 U.S. or (303)604-0540 all other countries. Or visit our subscription Web site at http://subscribe.playstationmagazine.com/service.

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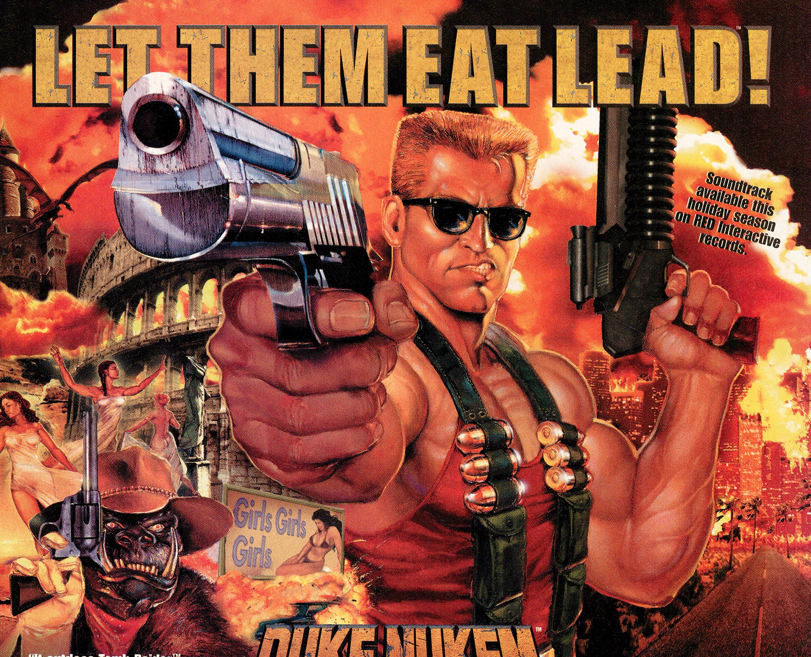
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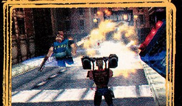

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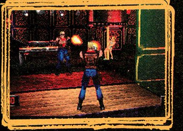

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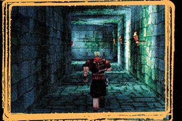

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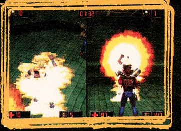

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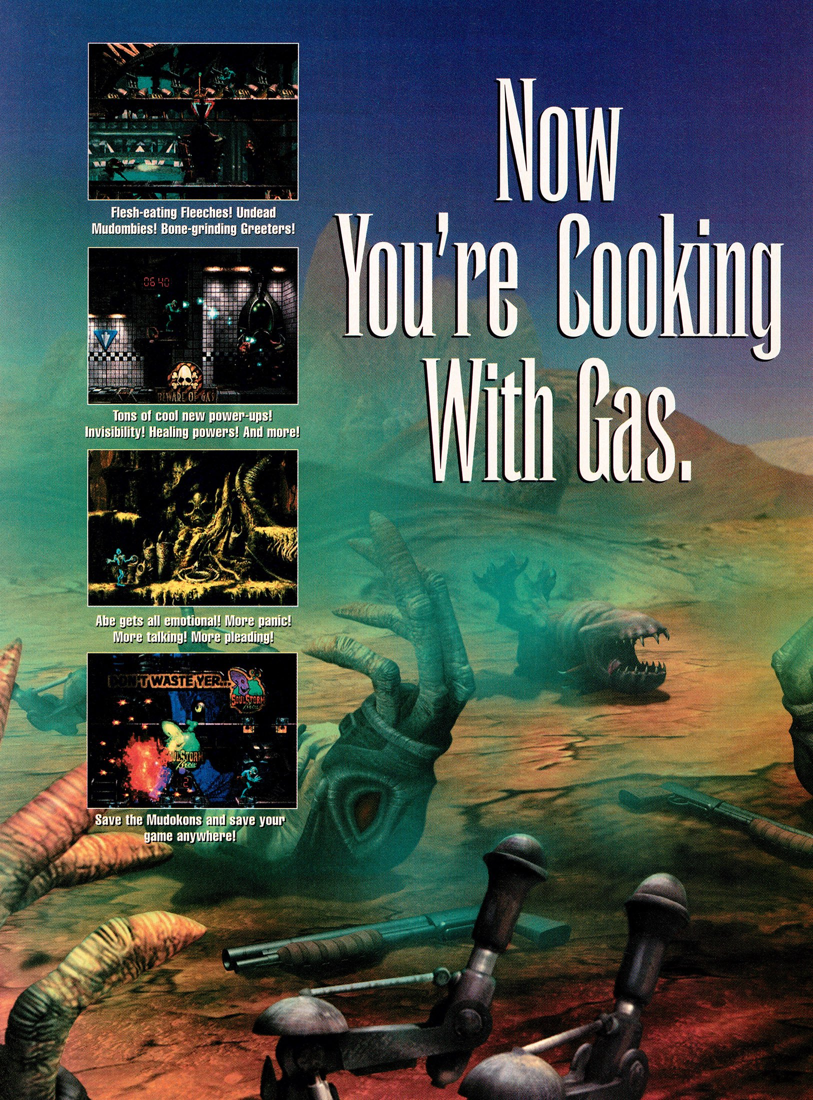
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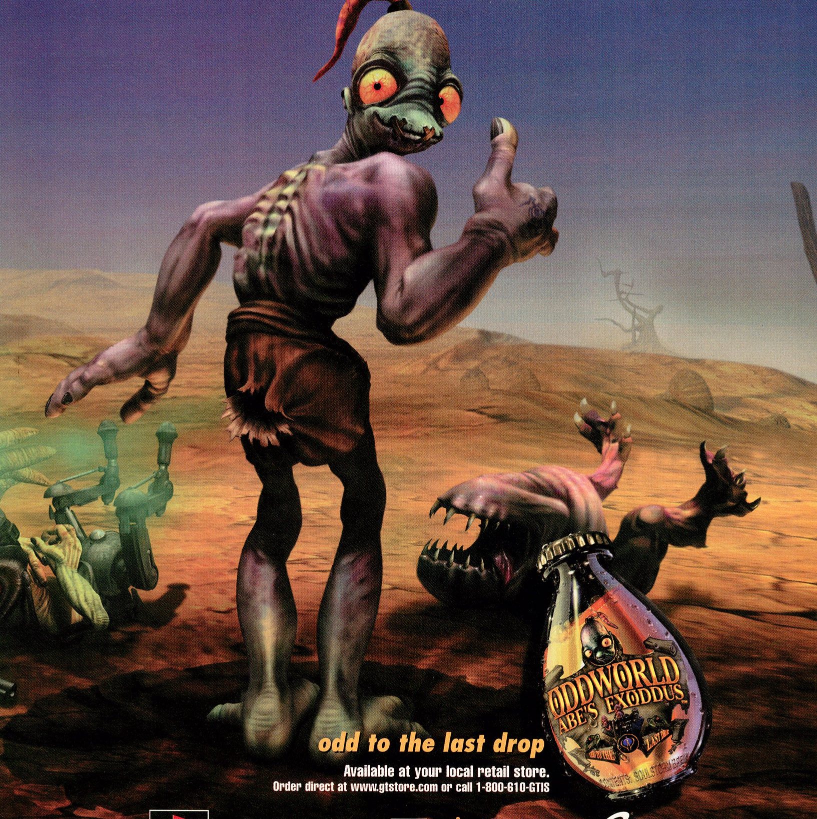

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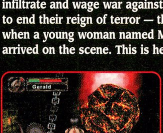

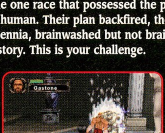

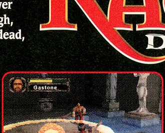

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So Gexxxxxxy!

The famous gecko is back, and he's fogging up the television with his steamiest adventure yet! Read all about it in this in-depth exclusive.

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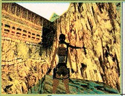
Tomb Raider Strategy



The Tomb Raider series is notorious for being really tough. Ease your way through the first half of the game with the first part of our guide!

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Holiday Buyer's Guide

Honestly, you don't need a fancy feature to tell you which games make great presents. Check out our short-and-sweet buyer's guide. It's all you need.

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You've been writing, we've been listening—especially concerning Thrill Kill and Square. Also, check out the new contests. We just have too much stuff that we want to get rid of!

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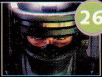

The next-generation PlayStation makes it back into the spotlight, and Final Fantasy makes it to the Silver Screen. There's plenty of other tidbits, including PaRappa 2 info!

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g.e.a.r.

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After hearing all the talk over Silent Hill, you can now try it for yourself on our demo disc. You can also play Brave Fencer Musashi, Moto Racer 2, T'ai Fu and see a video of Syphon Filter.

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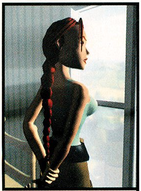


**Dear OPM,
I am a big fan of Tomb Raider. On page 144 of Volume 2, Issue 2, you have a picture of Lara topless. Did you do that on purpose or is it just me?
Shawn Fyke
via the Internet**

Shawn, it's just you. The "topless" look is simply the fact that the shade of Lara's shirt can't be differentiated from the shade of her skin in black and white. And while we're at it, the apparent "centerfold" at the beginning of that feature is NOT of her bare backside—it's just that her arm is covering the top of her shorts and the magazine's "gutter" obscures the bottom. Sickos! Get your minds out of the, er, gutter.

My Square is Back

Dear *OPM*,

I know I'll get a lot of flak for writing this, but I feel like getting a few things off my chest. I thought something had happened to Square. Every game they had released on the PlayStation was missing something. Let me start at the beginning:

My first RPG was Final Fantasy II for my SNES. I was hooked. Characters in video games that feel, think, talk in complete sentences... I started buying quite a few games: Secret of Mana, FFIII, Chrono Trigger—each was a bit different, but all were likeable.

Then the PlayStation came out, and to my horror Final Fantasy VII wasn't going to be on Nintendo. So I got a PlayStation. Tobal No. 1 came out, the worst fighting game I had played since Justice League. Bushido Blade was an OK game, but it wasn't fun against another person because the matches went so fast. But it didn't bother me. Square was trying new things, not RPGs; it could be expected.

Then came Final Fantasy VII. An hour into it I was ecstatic. But the next hour was ho-hum, and by the time the 10th hour rolled by I felt like I was forcing my way through it. The music was weak, the characters were asses, there were only seven of them, they had no facial expressions, and there was little game between cinemas. Then came Final Fantasy Tactics (a weak Ogre Battle clone) and Parasite Eve (a weak Resident Evil clone). It was all but over for Square for me.

So last Friday I stopped by my video store, and they had just gotten in Xenogears. I almost didn't rent it; I had all but given up on Square. But I did. And I'm glad I did. After playing nonstop for the three days I had it, I had buy it so I could have this gem in my collection. It has a wonderful story, plot twists galore, likeable characters and terrific music. And the anime scenes... gold. This is the game Final Fantasy VII should have been. It was an adult story that didn't need profanity to be called adult. It had well written, plentiful, thoughtful text. A story worthy of novelization. I just can't say enough about this amazing game.

So when you go to the store to buy your next game, think about Xenogears, too. It's worth every penny. Thank you Square, and welcome back.
elgato@pond.net

Although we wouldn't necessarily agree with your harsh assessment of Square's other 32-Bit games, we certainly second the Xenogears endorsement. It's one of the few "hardcore" (or, if you prefer, "old-school") RPGs to come along in quite some time. Let's hope this trend continues!

Rampant Speculation

Dear *OPM*,

After reading what little info has been printed about the PlayStation 2, I began to think that I'm not too keen on the format change. In my opinion, for PlayStation 2 to be optimally effective, it should be able to play the new PlayStation 2 games AND the original PlayStation games, right down to Tekken, Crash Bandicoot, Twisted Metal, and Ridge Racer.

If the PlayStation 2 were to change the format to MiniDisc, they'd be following in Nintendo's footsteps, changing cartridge shapes from the NES, to the SNES, then to N64. None of the old games are compatible with the new systems. Sure, it did work out in the end for Nintendo, but I think gamers would be a lot happier if they could carry their old libraries over to the new console without losing a dime.

If the PlayStation 2 were compatible with original PlayStation games, the problem Nintendo is now facing with its limited library wouldn't even cause a buzzing in Sony's ear.
Jaron Dempsey
jaron95@hotmail.com

Well, at this point any speculation on the new system is just that, speculation. As of this writing, the new chipset project Sony has announced (see this month's News section) has not even been confirmed as having anything at all to do with the PlayStation.

But you probably don't have anything to worry about with regards to MiniDisc. Although it was bandied about as a possible primary storage format, the most recent speculation suggests that if anything it will be used for removable storage, like memory cards are now.

As far as the backward-compatibility issue is concerned, it could be a possibility. If Sony does decide to go with DVD as a format, the system (like other DVD players) should be able to read CDs as well. Experts speculate that it would be a relatively simple thing to include hardware which would allow the new system to play the old games—in effect, the box could have both systems onboard.

We stress that this is all speculation; as of this writing, no official specifications have been released. An announcement with further details is expected within the next month, but rumor has it the new system will blow away any system yet released—or announced. Check in with us on videogames.com to see what was revealed, and then tune in next month for an in-depth story.

we want your input!

How do you like the mag? What about the design? Are we leaving anything out?

Let us know!

To get special attention as far as design and content issues go, label your letters or e-mails with the heading: PlayStation Magazine suggestions c/o the Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine at the addresses on the final Letters page.
We can't wait to hear from you.

Letter of the Month

Dear OPM,

Thank you for a surprisingly fresh look at "censorship" in games [Editorial; Vol. 2, Issue 3, p. 6]. Like you, I shuddered when Thrill Kill was killed, not because my rights of expression had been violated, but because I just knew that countless gamers would jump at the chance to voice their opinions on the issue. Nothing wrong with that, but the predictably predictable rants got old after about the first two days.

Personally, I was glad to see Thrill Kill killed for numerous reasons. First, just as there are always loonies in the background waiting to spring forth and defend the offensive, there are just as many fanatics waiting for something offensive to rear its ugly head so they can grab a few headlines trying to cut it off. This is a phenomenon as old as gaming itself. I've been playing games so long that I can remember an old arcade game called Boot Hill. The goal in Boot Hill was to get your little stickman cowboy to kill the other stickman cowboys on the screen. When you did, the opposing stickman cowboy turned into a rather innocuous-looking tombstone accompanied by a digital rendering of the funeral march. Despite the crude graphics and humorous tone of the game, it made headlines as well-meaning moms and dads tried to have the game banned due to its "violent" theme. As a result of the hubbub I went and tried the game. As is usually the case with games like this it grew very old very quickly as the "novelty" factor wore off. The last thing gaming needs now is something to drag the Senator Liebermans out of hiding.

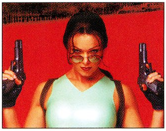
Second, games like Thrill Kill are seldom designed to add anything to gaming. They exist only to shock and outrage and sell thousands of copies to gamers who would be better off spending their gaming bucks on a little counseling. Look around at the various gaming sites on the Web. Almost to a man, they said that while the four-player option added a little variety, the graphics and control were definitely subpar. Even though I have owned practically every home system sold in the States since Pong came out, I have never owned any version of Mortal Kombat. As much as I like fighting games, I just don't want to pull anyone's spine out—not even in simulation.

Third, I now have children of my own who are starting to develop an interest in gaming. While video game violence is almost impossible to avoid, and not necessarily harmful, taking anything to an extreme, especially in the presence of children, is never a good thing. My young twin girls love to play the Tomb Raider games with me, but as a parent, I would cringe if I saw my children inflicting the pain and suffering shown in games like Thrill Kill.

Lastly, I just want to point out to everyone that their freedom of expression has in no way been violated by EA's decision to kill Thrill Kill. Gamers are just as free as they ever were to develop, program and distribute any game they want to. Bravo to you, Mr. Kujawa, for taking such a bold stance in your editorial. And bravo to Electronic Arts for killing Thrill Kill.

Gary O'Neal
Songwriter@ilovelara.com

Do you think you have what it takes to write the Letter of the Month? Send us your timely, original, well-written expositions on the state of the video game world and you too could win an official OPM Box of Joy. New surprise goodies every month! Enter early, and enter often!



"Yes" Box, "No" Box

Dear Lara Croft,

I think your games are awesome.
Do you have a boyfriend? ________
Can you give me codes? ________
Where are you from? ________
I'm from West Virginia. Send me a real-life picture of you if you can. I am a big fan of your games. Sign here if you want. ____________

Your fan,
Teddy Pigeon
Falling Waters, WV

P.S. I think you're pretty.

Dear Teddy,

Thanks for all your nice words. You're a very flattering young man. Unfortunately, I'm so busy travelling the world to collect precious artifacts that I just don't have time for a boyfriend. But keep buying my games and you can see me whenever you want!

Love,
Lara

Officially Speaking

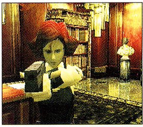
Dear *OPM*,

I started buying the magazine a couple of issues ago, and I am loving it. Originally I stayed away from your magazine, believe or not, because of the word "Official" in the title. I thought that by being OFFICIAL, you were to kiss some serious butt, and give great ratings to ALL the games. But I was wrong! I bought the October issue just for the demo of Metal Gear Solid and I was very surprised with the magazine. You have great reviews that give good ratings only when the game deserves it. Congratulations!

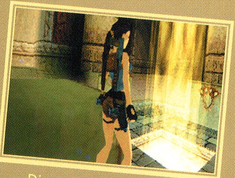
Juan Carlos Toro
jctoro@aracnet.net

Thanks! We made sure when we worked out the "official" deal that we'd be able to retain our independence. To their credit, SCEA realized that's best for all.

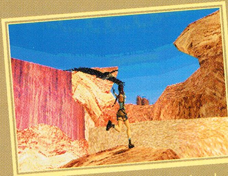
Last month, you got to witness how much fun a few ambiguous pictures and late-night brainstorming sessions can be in "Solid Snake: Declassified." Now you too can have your shot at history with the OPM Caption Contest! Every month, we'll run a game-related picture or screenshot. Your job is to write a humorous caption for it and submit it to us at any of the addresses on the following page. The winner will be chosen by the following scientific method: We'll read them all, and the one that makes us laugh our asses off will get the prize. In the event that different submissions induce equal amounts of helpless laughter, we'll take a vote or something. Anyway, we'll figure it out, and send you (meaning you, singular, the winner—not you, plural, the readers) a new game (a good new game) of our choosing. Now, see what you can do with this pic left over from last issue's feature:



[You didn't really think those were the official rules, did you? For all the legal stuff on this and our other contests, please refer to page 151.]



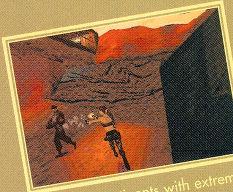
Discover what it takes to send shivers down your soul.



Annihilate your way through 15 levels of high-res mercilessness.

(Ready

Kayak rapids and motorcycle your escape from environments that will lose your mind.



Plough through five continents with extrem
prejudice. And a grenade launcher.

TOMB RAIDER III
ADVENTURES OF LARA CROFT

EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

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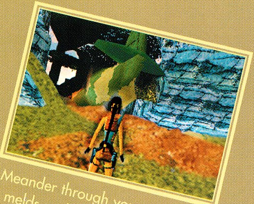
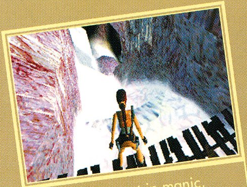
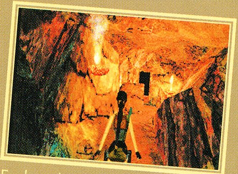


Meander through your mind
as it melds reality with imagination.



Check your gut in manic,
eyeball-blistering action.

for level 2?)

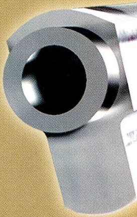


Explore dark caverns,
unknown lands and your will to live.

Enjoy international diplomatic immunity
with a set of 9mm's as your passport.

CORE

PlayStation



Heart stomping,
hair-straightening,
mind-melting action...

TOMB RAIDER III
ADVENTURES OF LARA CROFT

EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

Not even the gates of hell can contain your fury...

It's a grim world where your razor sharp claws slaughter the weak.

Where your voodoo spells incinerate your enemies.

Where your mind masters devious puzzles.

"...fast-paced, bloodthirsty, 3-D action."
-PSM

"...a step up technologically from similar titles in the past."
-EGM

PlayStation

TEEN
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Call 1.800.771.3772
for Game Rating information

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More With Less?

Dear *OPM,*

There has been a lot of speculation in recent months concerning when Sony will announce a new system. Everyone is anxious for the new-and-improved graphics that a new system will promise. Let's face it, fewer and fewer games really shock us with visuals like they did when the PlayStation first hit the market. I do not see this as such a bad thing. When a system is young, graphics sell games. Now that the capabilities of the PlayStation have been fully exposed, game designers are forced to do just what their name says: design. No longer will great graphics carry a game to successful sales. The PlayStation is beginning to show its age, but designers are combatting that with fantastic games. Look at Metal Gear Solid, Devil Dice, Crash 3, Colony Wars: Vengeance and Gran Turismo. These games show how much the PlayStation can do with fantastic design to complement its graphic capabilities.

We are truly in the midst of the greatest time to be a PlayStation owner. Let's savor it for a while. Sony has the right idea to wait to announce the new system. Game designers are doing their best work since the system was released. I am in no hurry for shallow games with great graphics that tend to be released with a new system. We have to admit that even our beloved PlayStation suffered these growing pains. I don't think the "Playstation 2"can avoid them, either.

Rodney Dunn
via the internet

The only problem with holding off for too long is that a new system may be in the unpleasant position of playing catch-up. Right now, it appears that Sony is poised to make a major announcement about a forthcoming system, which (surely not coincidentally) will certainly take some of the wind out of their competitors' sails. At the same time, an announcement at this point—even if the system were not scheduled to be released in the States for another couple of years—would assure PlayStation owners that their company has plans for a system powerful enough to blow its competitors out of the water. Then we can all just sit back, get comfortable and watch it happen.

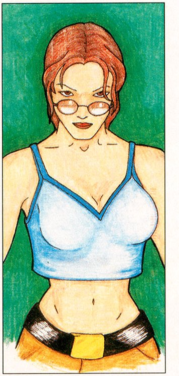
DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TO *OPM*? POINT YOUR BROWSER TO http://subscribe.playstationmagazine.com/service AND FILL OUT THE APPROPRIATE FORM. WITH A CREDIT CARD, YOU CAN EVEN START A NEW SUBSCRIPTION!

Did you buy a copy of our magazine that did not contain a demo CD? Within 60 days from the time of purchase, simply send the receipt in an envelope marked "OPM Replacement Disc" to the address below with the name and address of the store plus your phone number and address and we'll send you the disc. Make sure you specify which month the corresponding disc belongs to in order to ensure you get the right one.

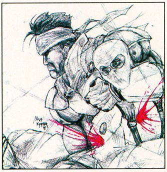
Also, if you have a malfunctioning or non-working demo disc, call SCEA at 1-800-345-SONY. They will provide instructions to obtain repair or replacement services. For more information see this month's Demo Disc section.

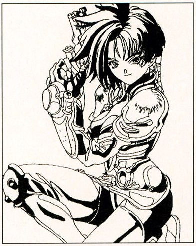
A Kinder, Gentler Reader Art

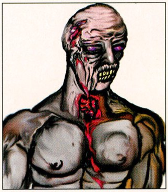
Every month we'll be picking one exceptional piece as our Reader Art of the Month. The creator of the winning work will have his/her piece published and will receive a new game (a *good* new game) in the mail—so include your mailing address with all submissions. Runners-up (as many as we want, 'cause it's our magazine) are printed as well. Good luck!



Check out this month's artists (clockwise from right): Chris Kirchner, LtSnakel@aol.com; Charlie Galbreath, Jr., CEG007@iamerica.net; Jenny Wilkes, Little Rock, AR; and this month's Reader Art of the Month winner, Lorna Boyne of Silverwood, MI. Congratulations, Lorna! Your new game is on its way!







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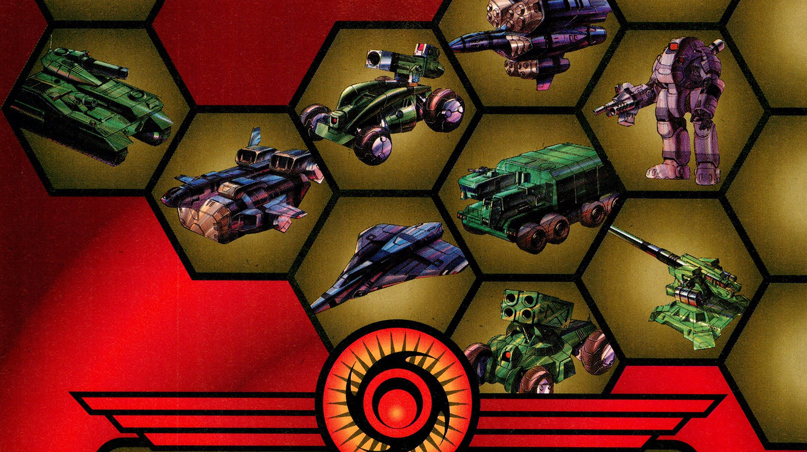

nectaris

MILITARY MADNESS

WHEN
THE BATTLE
REACHES
THE MOON...

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PlayStation®

FLAME THROWER ON BOARD !
CAUTION:
THIS CAR MAKES SUDDEN EXPLOSIONS.
FLAMMABLE
3
MY OTHER CAR IS A HEARSE.
IF YOU CAN READ THIS, I'LL BLOW YOU UP.
1 SCRM

TEEN

CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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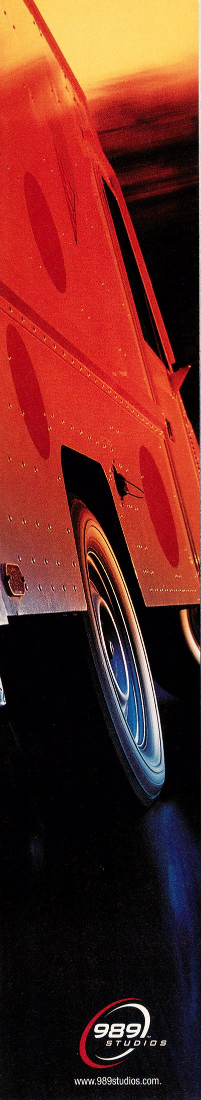

TRUST US,

IT'S NOT THE CALORIES THAT'LL KILL YOU.

PlayStation
Twisted Metal III
989

SWEET TOOTH IS BACK AND HE'S ARMED TO THE HILT. FEATURING 10 DEADLY WORLDS, 12 UNIQUE COMBAT VEHICLES AND AN INTENSE DEATHMATCH ARENA, THIS GAME IS PACKED WITH BONE-JARRING, NECK-SNAPPING AUTOMOTIVE MAYHEM. THROW IN EXPLOSIVE MUSIC BY ROB ZOMBIE, POWERFUL NEW WEAPONS, KILLER COMBO MOVES, AND TWISTED METAL III WILL DESTROY YOU FASTER THAN A 16-SCOOP SUNDAE.

LIVES
TURBO
SPECIAL

TWISTED METAL III

LIFE ON THE ROAD IS HELL.

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News

A monthly wrap-up of all the information for your favorite system

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PlayStation 2 Ally Emerges?

As competition for the video game hardware market begins to heat up, the first rumblings about the next PlayStation have begun. Amidst the current speculation about the machine comes a report from Japan's Nikkei Electronics Wire reporting that Sony and Toshiba are working together to develop a chipset for Sony's next machine (frequently called PlayStation 2, PlayStation Next, etc.). An announcement is expected in Japan in November '98, with the predicted date the console could be released as soon as late '99.

The chipset itself will be introduced at the IEEE International Solid-State Circuits Conference next February (an expo for chip makers). Composed of two chips, the chipset is made up of a Digital Signal Processor (DSP) and a new RISC-based (Reduced Instruction Set Computer) processor. These two chips are believed to be for the PS2, although at this time there has been no official announcement regarding Sony's next machine.

The 10,500,000 transistor, 250 MHz DSP will combine 14 accumulators for floating point calculations, to aid in processing rich 3D graphics. Another rumor suggests that Sony's next machine will use a more advanced form of 3D graphics called NURBS (or Non-Uniform Rational B-Spline), thus evolving the look of computer graphics to near CG-cinema quality.

PlayStation 2
SONY

NURBS is a technique that allows developers to specify 3D surfaces on object in an environment. For instance, when a player is shooting at a wall, a programmer can make that surface take damage as it would in real life, actually indenting or curving the original polygon used to create it, instead of drawing new polygons.

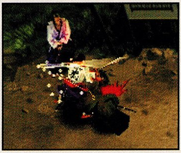
Additionally, the DSP will contain a hardware MPEG-2 decoder (used to decode DVD movies). If this report is true, gamers may be playing DVDs on a console in addition to playing games. Also running at 250MHz, the RISC microprocessor, using MIPS architecture, will be two-way super scaler, with more than 100 new multimedia extensions. Internally, the RISC chip will combine an 8K data cache, a 16K command cache and 16K of internal RAM. No word yet on what bit depth the new Sony/Toshiba chip will run at.

DVD or Not to Be?

Toshiba is one of 10 companies that own rights to the DVD format (Sony is another). They are advocates of the medium, and it would be to their advantage for the PlayStation 2 hardware to implement the DVD media format.

Akuji Gets the Shaft

The star of Crystal Dynamics's new action/adventure game Akuji the Heartless has been revealed as none other than Richard Roundtree, star of the classic '70s blaxploitation action flick *Shaft*, as well as *Shaft in Africa* and *Shaft's Big Score*. Roundtree will lend his unique voice as the game's lead character Akuji when the game hits this December.

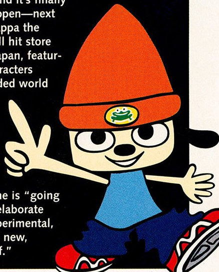


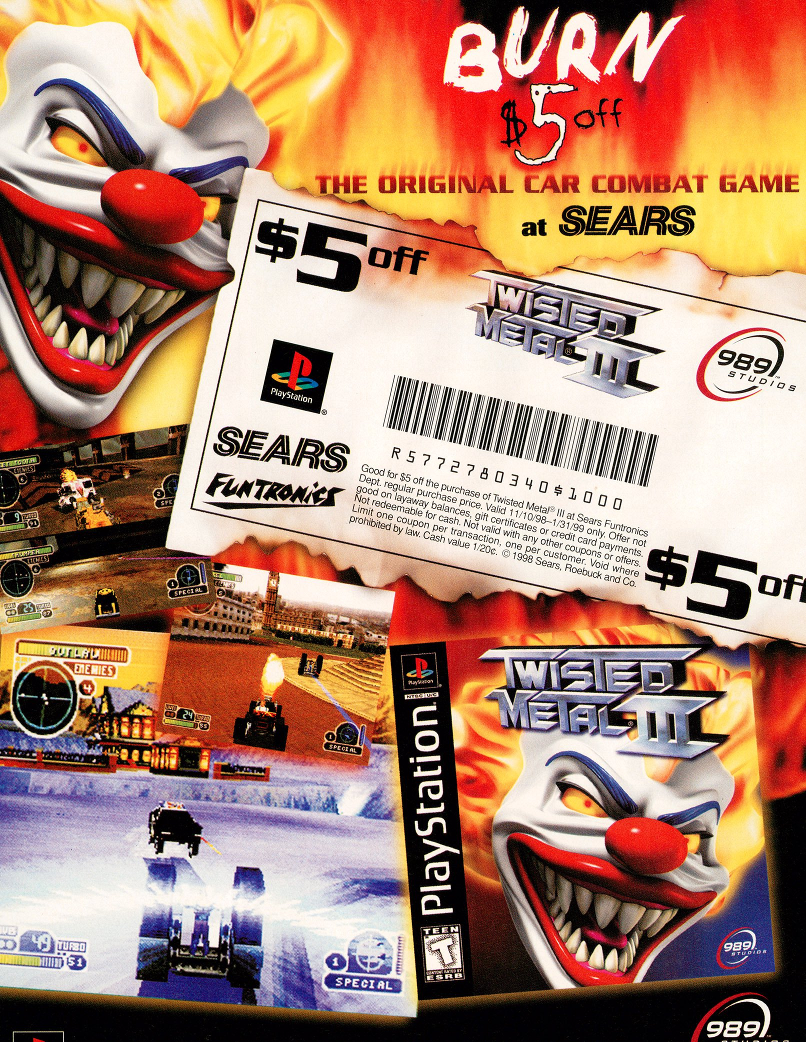
Konami Assassinates "Japan" Game's Name.

Now known as Shogun Assassins, the first game from Konami's new development studio in Sapporo is already turning heads. With a visual style similar to Resident Evil (prerendered backdrops and real-time characters), this action/adventure title lets you control one of two warriors investigating a rash of recent deaths in your village. SA invades Japan this summer.

You Still Gotta Believe!

When PaRappa the Rapper hit Japanese shelves over a year ago, it was an immediate success. A sequel seemed inevitable, and it's finally about to happen—next spring, PaRappa the Rapper 2 will hit store shelves in Japan, featuring new characters in an expanded world of whimsy. PaRappa artist Rodney Greenblat told Reuters that the game is "going to be more elaborate and very experimental, with a lot of new, original stuff."

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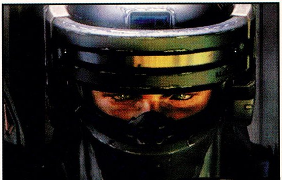
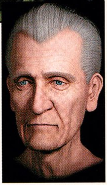
Final Fantasy Movie No Longer a Dream





How do you follow-up years of making great games that feel like movies? If your name is Square, you start making movies! Square recently made it official that it's working on *Final Fantasy: The Movie* for release in 2001. The company says that this will be the "first computer-generated, animated motion picture with photo-real human characters," and from the looks of it, this is the first step a game company has made toward making a feature-length CG movie based around a game series.

Columbia Pictures will distribute the movie worldwide (except for Japan and Asia). "Those of us who have witnessed the phenomenal success of Final Fantasy VII on the PlayStation game console are delighted to be part of bringing the film version to the public," stated Chris Lee, president of production at Columbia Pictures.

Square says that the movie will be set on Earth circa 2065 and will be inspired by the Final Fantasy series of game titles in a story about life and death. Based on the recent success of computer animated flicks like Antz and Toy Story, Final Fantasy - The Movie has the potential to be even bigger, especially considering the game's long history. Square's ambitious goal is to be the first to simulate truly authentic human emotions and movements through computer graphics. All this takes an amazing amount of computing time—reportedly a full day to render just one second of movie footage. The images you see here were created for testing purposes and will not be in the final movie, but they give you a good idea of the high level of quality you can expect. Square is using Maya, a new 3D rendering and animation program by Alias/Wavefront, for all the models and rendering on the film.

"*Final Fantasy: The Movie* will be the realization of a dream to create a brand-new form of entertainment uniting computer games and motion pictures, using the latest in CG animation technology," said Hironobu Sakaguchi, director of *Final Fantasy: The Movie* and president of Square USA. "With this film, I want to create entertainment that touches the imagination of new generations by setting the viewer on an exciting voyage of personal discovery."

Production of the movie is currently taking place at Square's Honolulu studio.

It's In The Numbers

300

Number of football stadiums you could fill with PlayStation owners in the U.S.

10

Percentage of Households in America that own a PlayStation

Source: Sony Computer Entertainment of America

Ridge Racer Type 4 Extra Goodies

namco CATALOGUE '98
page 1
page 2
page 3
page 4
○-GO
×-EXIT
COMING SOON
COMING SOON
COMING SOON

When R4: Ridge Racer Type 4 hits shelves in Japan on Dec. 3, it'll come with an extra disc containing some great bonuses. First, is a cleaned-up version of the original Ridge Racer called the High Spec Version that runs at a smooth 60 frames-per-second. Also included on the second disc is a catalog where players can browse info on Namco's PlayStation releases, guidebooks and peripherals and play demos of Libero Grande, Tales of Destiny, Tekken 3 and Klonoa. R4 was also recently reported to be compatible with the new PocketStation PDA/memory card

10 Things We Think We Think This Month

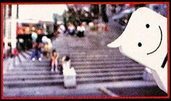
1 You're going to start hearing a lot of games promise all sorts of features that are "just like Metal Gear Solid".

2 Crash Bandicoot: WARPED! will be the last Crash game on the current PlayStation hardware. We haven't seen the last of him though.

3 It's about time Warhawk got a sequel. Only this time, please, hire real actors.

4 Ridge Racer Type 4 will be unimaginatively dubbed the "Gran Turismo killer" way too many times by the gaming press. Hell, maybe we'll say it a few times, too.

5 Mr. Domino can't be stopped. We're pretty sure about this one.



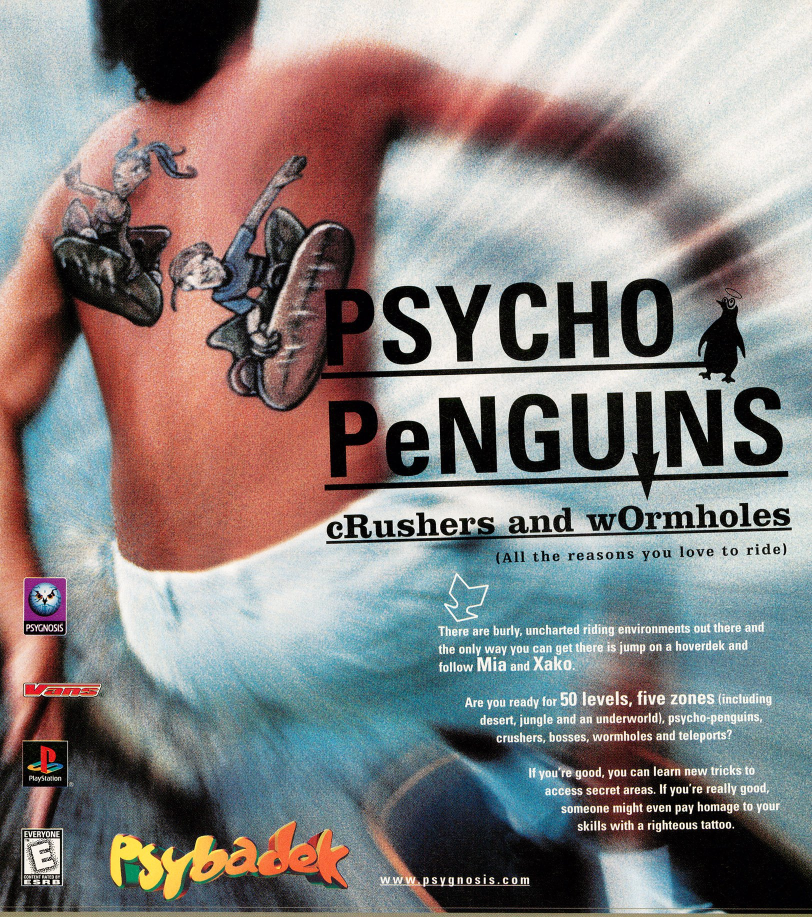
6 EA's decision to release NBA Live 99 during the lockout wasn't very wise. At least Shaq will have some way to practice his free throws during negotiations.

7 Konami's Beatmania game and DJ controller need to be brought over to the U.S. We can't allow Japan to corner the market on groove technology.

8 The Dual Shock is the best all-around controller ever released for any system. Now if they'd just loosen up that D-pad for fighting games...

9 The Contra series deserves much better than its crappy PlayStation sequels.

10 Jaleco is actually going to release a game called 'Irritating Stick'. A shame it just missed our list of 10 games you can play with your girlfriend.



PSYCHO PeNGUINS

cRushers and wOrmholes

(All the reasons you love to ride)

There are burly, uncharted riding environments out there and the only way you can get there is jump on a hoverdek and follow **Mia** and **Xako**.

Are you ready for **50 levels, five zones** (including desert, jungle and an underworld), psycho-penguins, crushers, bosses, wormholes and teleports?

If you're good, you can learn new tricks to access secret areas. If you're really good, someone might even pay homage to your skills with a righteous tattoo.

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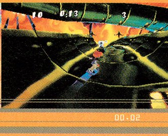
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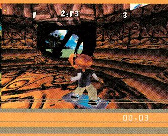
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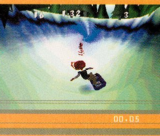
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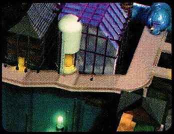
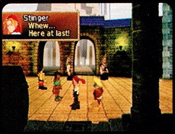
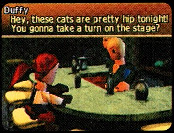




Stinger
Whew...
Here at last!



Duffy
Hey, these cats are pretty hip tonight!
You gonna take a turn on the stage?

Guarded
Normal
Aggressive

“Shadow Madness' story is easily comparable, if not superior, to the top titles of the genre...” — *GameFan Online*

YOU can't run from

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RATING PENDING
RP
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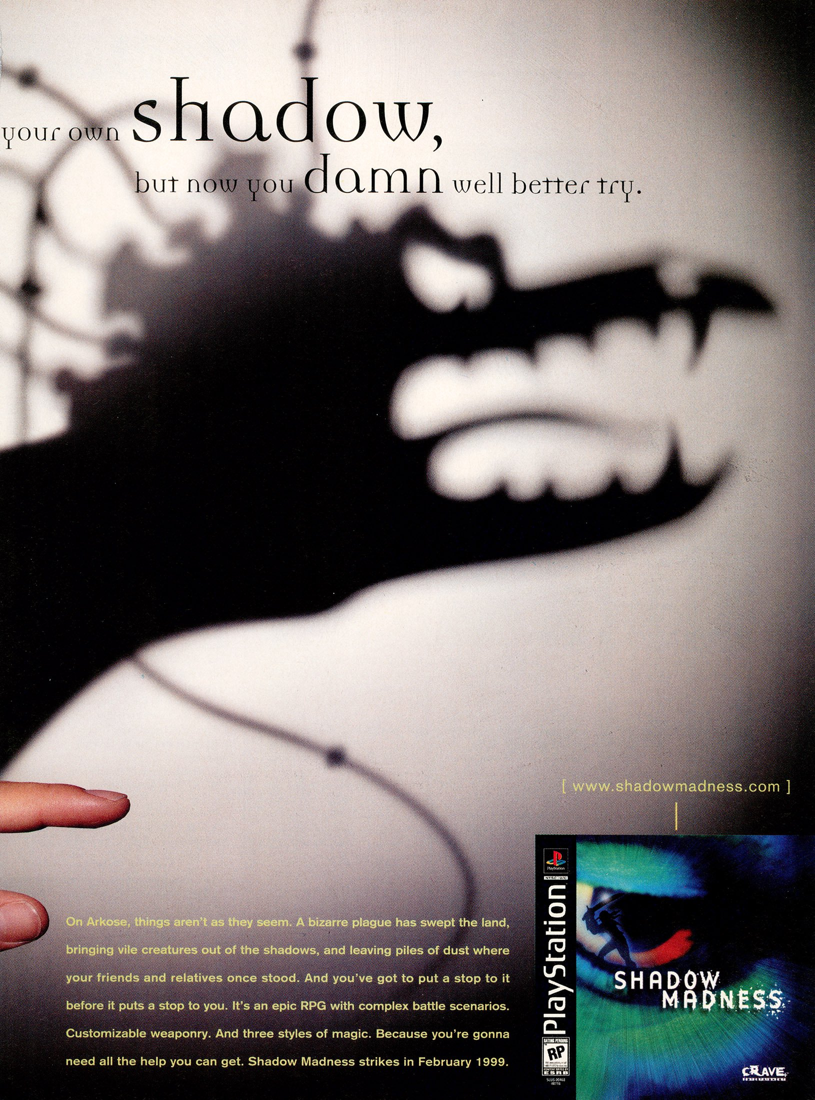
ESRB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PlayStation
NTSC U/C
PlayStation
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
SHADOW MADNESS
CRAVE

On Arkose, things aren't as they seem. A bizarre plague has swept the land, bringing vile creatures out of the shadows, and leaving piles of dust where your friends and relatives once stood. And you've got to put a stop to it before it puts a stop to you. It's an epic RPG with complex battle scenarios. Customizable weaponry. And three styles of magic. Because you're gonna need all the help you can get. Shadow Madness strikes in February 1999.

News Bits

Tenchu Re-deux

THE FACTS: Seems that Sony Music Entertainment liked the changes Activison made to Tenchu for the U.S. market so much that they're planning to rerelease the game in Japan in a new Director's Cut edition.
THE RUB: Don't be surprised if you see this happening more and more often with other games that are improved for the Western market, like Metal Gear Solid.

"Hello, am I Speaking to the Gamer of the House?"

THE FACTS: Interplay has been using telemarketing to sell their various PlayStation titles like Heart of Darkness.
THE RUB: You know the PlayStation has hit the mainstream when companies start using the same tactics to peddle their games as insurance firms and long-distance carriers.

Metal Gear Sales

THE FACTS: Konami reported that sales of Metal Gear Solid topped 350,000 in its first week on sale in the U.S.
THE RUB: It looks like there's gonna be a lot of presents under the trees of Konami employees this holiday season.

Activison Believes in Legends

THE FACTS: Activison recently announced it will bring Guardian Legends, an action-RPG with virtual-pet elements, to the U.S. this March. The game focuses on a quest to reunite a baby monster with its mother.

THE RUB: Guardian Legends was developed by Tamsoft, the makers of the Toshinden games—which can be seen as a good or bad sign depending on who you ask.

Atlus Seeks Your Advice

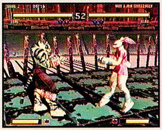
THE FACTS: Atlus asked gamers if they should bring the PlayStation version of Soul Hackers, an RPG from the makers of Persona, to the U.S. A special e-mail account was created where gamers could voice their support.

いかがなさいますか？
悪魔合体を行う
外へ出る

THE RUB: Soul Hackers is the latest in a long line of very popular games in Japan (the Shin Megami Tensei series), and the Saturn version earned good reviews there when it was released last year. Gamers spoke out overwhelmingly in favor of the game and Atlus wants to do it, so now it's all up to Sony to decide whether they will approve it or not. We should know the verdict next month—keep your fingers crossed.

Hudson Sets Bloody Release

THE FACTS: Hudson recently announced plans to release Bloody Roar 2, the sequel to its popular human/animal 3D fighter, on the PlayStation in Japan this January.
THE RUB: Alright, there are plenty of fighters for the PlayStation already, but how many of them let you kick six foot tall bunny ass?



989 Opens New Studio

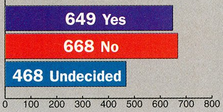
THE FACTS: 989 Studios, developers of such big name games as GameDay and Twisted Metal 3, announced they will be opening a new development studio in Santa Moinica, California.
THE RUB: Supposedly the minds behind the Twisted Metal and Jet Moto games will now reside in the new Santa Monica studio, and we suspect big things may be underway there already for Sony's next machine. GameDay, perhaps?

EA Nabs Pro Boarders

THE FACTS: Electronic Arts has acquired the rights for X-Games Pro Boarders.
THE RUB: Apparently EA was getting concerned a sport existed they actually didn't have a game for—look for rollerblading, water polo, and maybe even dwarf-tossing soon.

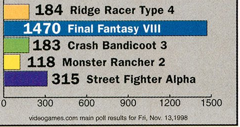
The Results Are In

Are you planning on buying a PocketStation?



videogames.com main poll results for Thurs, Nov. 12,1998

Which game are you most excited to play on the PocketStation?



videogames.com main poll results for Fri, Nov. 13,1998

Top 10

Special thanks to the many readers who have responded to Import Game Request! Check out our International previews and tell us what you want!

Readers' Import Request

1. **Dragon Quest VII** Enix - RPG
2. **Final Fantasy VIII** Square - RPG
3. **Ehrgeiz** Square - Fighting
4. **RPG Maker** Ascii - RPG
5. **Thousand Arms** Atlus - RPG
6. **Policenauts** Konami - Adventure
7. **Slayers Royal** Gainax - Simulation
8. **Macross Digital Mission VF-X** Bandai - Action
9. **Baby Universe** SCEI - Misc
10. **Tails of Phatasia** Namco - RPG

Japan's Top 10-Selling PlayStation Games

September sales rankings courtesy of *The PlayStation Magazine Weekly*, SOFTBANK:

1. **Legend of Legaia** SCEI - RPG
2. **Beat Mania** Konami - Misc
3. **Super Robot Wars** Banpresto - Strategy
4. **Simple 1500 Series Mahjong** Culture Publishers - Puzzle
5. **Metal Gear Solid** Konami - Adventure
6. **Sampaguita** SCEI - Adventure
7. **SD Gundam G-Generation** Bandai - Sim
8. **Spectral Force 2** Idea Factory - Simulation
9. **Itadaki Street Gorgeous King** Enix - Puzzle
10. **Kamen Rider** Bandai - Fighting

U.K.'s Top 10-Selling PlayStation Games

September sales rankings courtesy of Chart Track, ©ELSPA 1998:

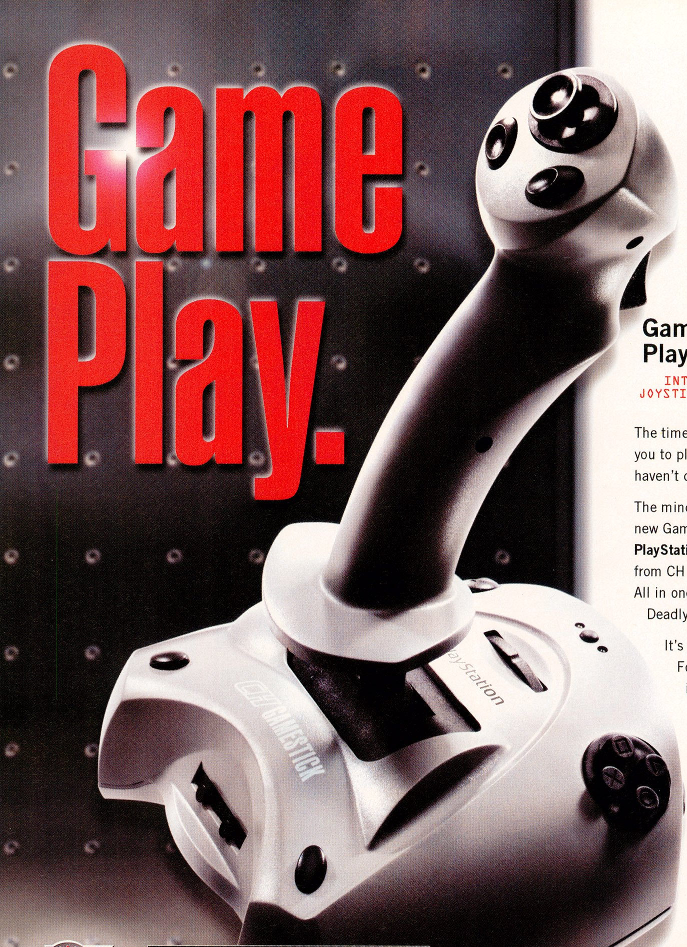
1. **Spyro the Dragon** Sony - Action
2. **Formula 1 '98** Psygnosis - Racing
3. **TOCA Touring Car Championships** (Platinum) Codemasters - Racing
4. **Tekken 3** Namco/Sony - Fighting
5. **Resident Evil** (Platinum) Virgin - Adventure
6. **Crash Bandicoot** (Platinum) Sony - Action
7. **Grand Theft Auto** (Platinum) Take 2 - Action
8. **Tenchu** Activison - Action
9. **V Rally** (Platinum) Infogrames U.K. - Racing
10. **Colin McRae Rally** Codemasters - Racing

(Note: Platinum is the U.K. equivalent of Greatest Hits domestically.)

Import Game Request Winners

January Winner
Adam Julian
Oakland City, IN 47660

Vote for your most-wanted PlayStation import games and you can have a chance to win a free video from Manga Entertainment (see p.183 for contest rules). Send your requests via e-mail, snail mail, fax or online to the addresses listed in the Letters section. **Do it now!**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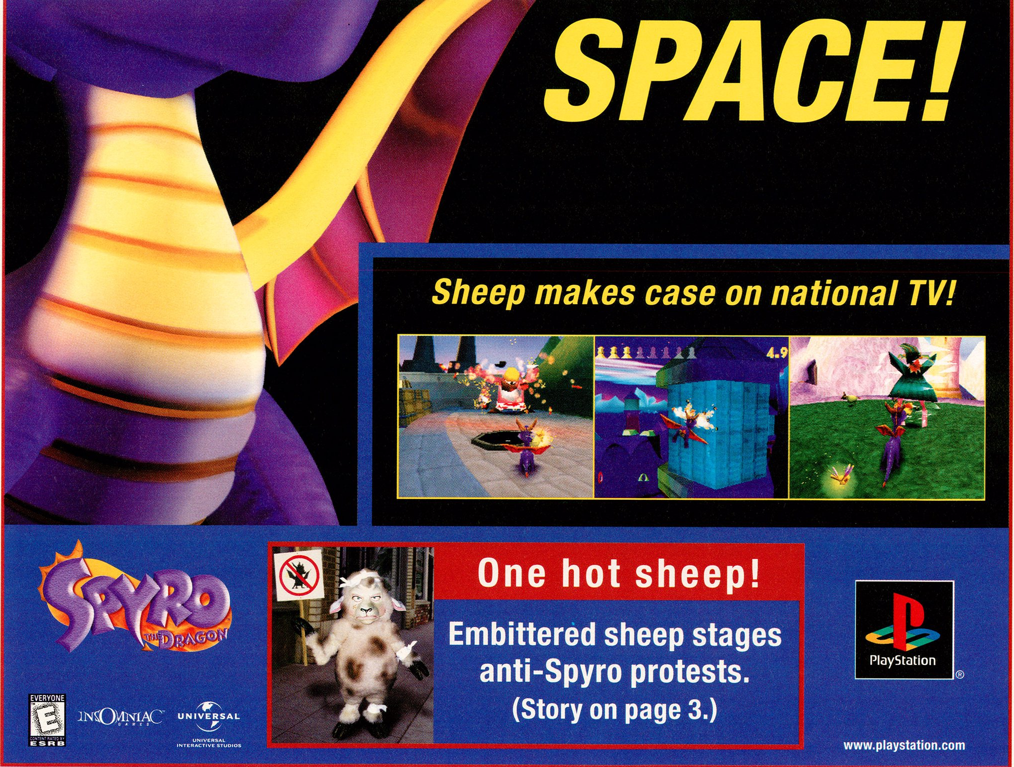
Secret life revealed

Spyro breathes fire, glides, flies and headbutts his way through graphically stunning, completely interactive worlds. Spyro rescues dragon families, collects treasure, recovers jewels and discovers hidden regions. Spiritual healers advise clients to follow Spyro!

FLYING DRAGON SEEN ENTERING U.S. AIR



SPACE!

Sheep makes case on national TV!

4.9

One hot sheep!

Embittered sheep stages anti-Spyro protests.

(Story on page 3.)

SPYRO THE DRAGON
EVERYONE
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UNIVERSAL INTERACTIVE STUDIOS
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Top 20

The best-selling U.S. PlayStation titles as reported by the nation's top retailers

1 Madden NFL 99 ●●●●◐

Publisher: EA **Last Month:** 4 **Genre:** Sports **Release Date:** Aug. 1998

Football season has kicked into high gear, and the football games have as well. Expect to see these two near the top for a while to come.

2 NFL GameDay 99 ●●●●○

Publisher: 989 Studios **Last Month:** 6 **Genre:** Sports **Release Date:** Aug. 1998

Another great football game, NFL GameDay 99 still needs a bit of work in the area of realism. But for those looking for more action, it's ideal.

3 Parasite Eve ●●●●○

Publisher: SquareSoft **Last Month:** — **Genre:** Action **Release Date:** Aug. 1998

Plenty of people have been intrigued by Square's cinematic thriller. Sure, there's not much of a cerebral challenge, but the story is plenty spooky.

4 WWF War Zone ●●●●○

Publisher: Acclaim **Last Month:** 1 **Genre:** Action **Release Date:** July 1998

At last, Acclaim gives guys a chance to play dress-up with the amusing Create-A-Wrestler Option.

5 Crash Bandicoot 2 ●●●●○

Publisher: SCEA **Last Month:** — **Genre:** Action **Release Date:** Oct. 1997

Sure, Crash 2 may have been an impressive game, but Crash Bandicoot: WARPED is even better. Just wait 'till next month.

6 NFL Blitz ●●●●●
Publisher: Midway **Last Month:** — **Release Date:** Sept. 1998

7 Gran Turismo ●●●●●
Publisher: SCEA **Last Month:** 3 **Release Date:** May 1998

8 Spyro the Dragon ●●●●○
Publisher: SCEA **Last Month:** — **Release Date:** Sept. 1998

9 Twisted Metal 2 ●●●●○
Publisher: 989 Studios **Last Month:** — **Release Date:** Nov. 1996

10 NCAA Football 99 ●●●●◐
Publisher: EA **Last Month:** 2 **Release Date:** Aug. 1998

11 Cool Boarders 2 ●●●●○
Publisher: 989 Studios **Last Month:** — **Release Date:** Nov. 1997

12 Tekken 2 ●●●●◐
Publisher: Namco **Last Month:** — **Release Date:** Aug. 1996

13 NASCAR 99 ●●●●○
Publisher: EA **Last Month:** — **Release Date:** Sept. 1998

14 Tomb Raider ●●●●○
Publisher: Eidos **Last Month:** 8 **Release Date:** Nov. 1996

15 Tenchu ●●●●○
Publisher: Activision **Last Month:** — **Release Date:** Sept. 1998

16 Tekken 3 ●●●●●
Publisher: Namco **Last Month:** 7 **Release Date:** April 1998

17 WCW Vs the World ●●●◐○
Publisher: THQ **Last Month:** 12 **Release Date:** March 1997

18 Jet Moto 2 ●●●◐○
Publisher: 989 Studios **Last Month:** — **Release Date:** Nov. 1997

19 Crash Bandicoot ●●●●○
Publisher: SCEA **Last Month:** 10 **Release Date:** Sept. 1996

20 Tetris Plus ●●●◐○
Publisher: Jaleco **Last Month:** 19 **Release Date:** Oct. 1996

namco Presents

Top 10 Most Wanted

As compiled by our attractive, intelligent readers

1. **Metal Gear Solid** Apparently, everyone's looking for a second copy, 'cause they wore the first one out.
2. **Crash Bandicoot: WARPED** It all comes together in Crash's third adventure.
3. **Silent Hill** Resident Evil, Schmesident Evil. Just try not to be scared by Silent Hill.
4. **Tomb Raider III** Check out this month's review to see how this one turned out.
5. **Bust A Groove** Forget "Chop, Kick, Block"—it's time to shake your booty.
6. **Quake II** They said it couldn't be done, but we've seen it in action, and so far it looks sweet.
7. **Final Fantasy VIII** Will Square address the issues people had with FFVII?
8. **Parasite Eve** The lovely Aya Brea embarks on a creepy New York adventure.
9. **Xenogears** Square has unleashed this epic RPG, more than satisfying fans of the classics.
10. **South Park** No official word yet on how similar this will be to the hysterical N64 version.

* Congratulations to our December Top 10 winner: Beth McKoin *

Beth McKoin's Top Five

Our monthly contest winner's top-five picks

1. **A Bug's Life** Well, the movie may be spectacular, but the game's sort of a stinkbug.
2. **Tomba** You can't help but love its classic platforming action with an RPG twist!
3. **Triple Play 99** Really? Hmm, we'd suggest MLB 99; but, hey, it's your dime.
4. **NBA Live 99** Well, hopefully the lockout will be over by the time you read this. Hopefully.
5. **Team Losi RC Racer** At this point, it's probably better to hold off until you get a look at Revolt.

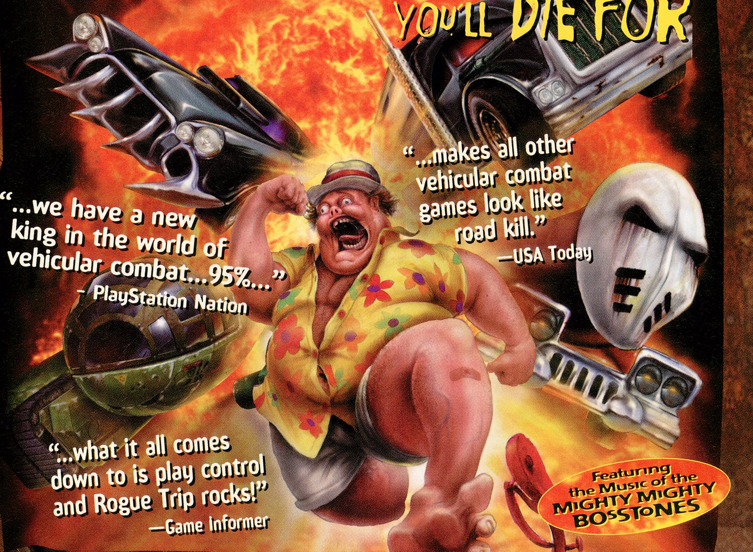
Editors' Top 5

What we've been playing instead of working

1. **Silent Hill** It's the stuff nightmares are made of. See this month's disc for a nightmare of your own.
2. **Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver** An extensive preview version has us eager for a finished copy!
3. **Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete** This update to the classic game brings back fond memories.
4. **Bust A Groove** You can't help but love a game with dancing aliens in it.
5. **Metal Gear Solid** Yep, this game's still making the rounds on our staff. We just can't get enough!

Send your votes for the Readers' 10 Most Wanted games to: *Official PlayStation Magazine* Attn: Readers' 10 Most Wanted, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338 or e-mail us at: dan_peluso@zd.com or visit the *OPM* section on videogames.com

THE VACATION THEY'D KILL FOR IS THE VACATION YOU'LL DIE FOR



"...we have a new king in the world of vehicular combat...95%..."
- PlayStation Nation

"...makes all other vehicular combat games look like road kill."
—USA Today

"...what it all comes down to is play control and Rogue Trip rocks!"
—Game Informer

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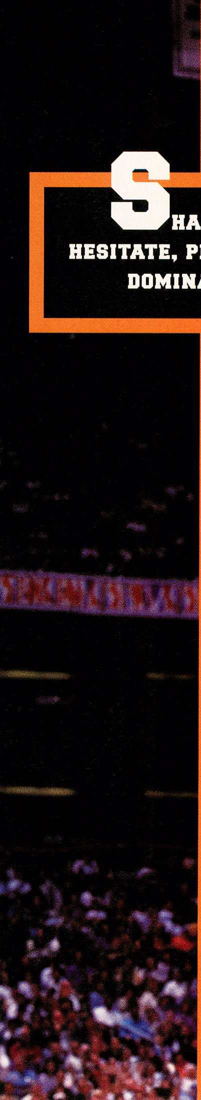
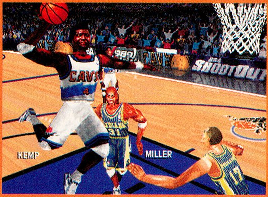


SHAKE, BAKE, DRIVE, HESITATE, PENETRATE, ELEVATE, DOMINATE. (REPEAT.)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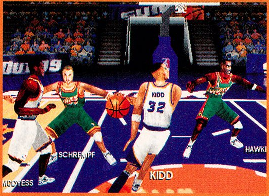
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32
SCHREMPF
KIDD
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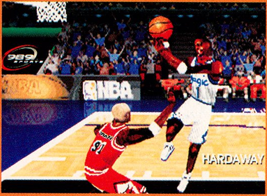
HAWK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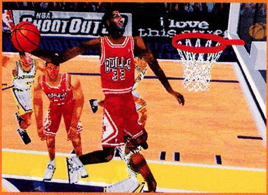
NBA
HARDAWAY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i love this game
BULLS
33

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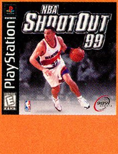

PlayStation
NBA
SHOOTOUT
99
E

Coming Soon

Compiled by John Stockhausen with expert input from Johnny Masthead

January

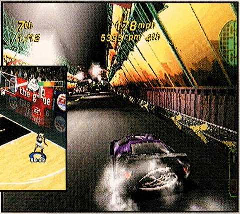
Army Men 3D	3DO	Action
Big Air Snowboarding	Accolade	Sports
Clock Tower II: The Struggle Within	Ascii	Adventure
Contender	SCEA	Sports
Dead in the Water	ASC Games	Action
Destrega	Koei	Fighting
Eliminator	Psygnosis	Action
Global Domination	Psygnosis	Strategy
Irritating Stick	Jaleco	Puzzle
Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete	Working Designs	RPG
Marvel vs. Street Fighter	Capcom	Fighting
Monkey Hero	Take 2	Adventure
Monster Seed	Sunsoft	Strategy
NCAA Final Four	989 Studios	Sports
NCAA March Madness College BB	Electronic Arts	Sports
Quake 2	Activision	Action
Tiny Tank: Up Your Arsenal	MGM Interactive	Action
WCW/nWo Thunder	THQ	Action

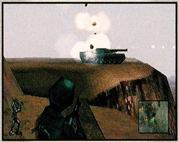
February

Beavis & Butt-head do Hollywood	GT Interactive	Action
Blast Radius	Psygnosis	Action
Hard Edge	Sunsoft	Action
K 1 Revenge	Jaleco	Fighting
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver	Eidos	Adventure
NBA In the Zone 99	Konami	Sports
NHL Blades of Steel	Konami	Sports
Pro 18 World Tour Golf	Psygnosis	Sports
Shadow Madness	Crave Entertainment	RPG
Silent Hill	Konami	Adventure
Street Fighter Alpha 3	Capcom	Fighting
Syphon Filter	989 Studios	Adventure
War Zone 2100	Eidos	Strategy

March

3 Xtreme	989 Studios	Sports
All-Star Tennis 99	Ubi Soft	Sports
Attack of the Saucerman	Psygnosis	Action
Baseball 2000	Interplay	Sports
Carmageddon 2	Interplay	Action
Fisherman's Bait	Konami	Sports
G Police 2	Psygnosis	Action
Gex 3	Eidos	Action
Jeff Gordon XS Racing	ASC Games	Racing
Monaco Grand Prix	Ubi Soft	Racing
Rampage Universal Tour	Midway	Action
RC Stunt Copter	Midway	Action
RollCage	Psygnosis	Racing
Rushdown	Infogrames	Sports
Shogun Assassins	Konami	Action
Silhouette Mirage	Working Designs	Action
Tail Concerto	Bandai	Action
Xena: Warrior Princess	989 Studios	Action





Clockwise from top: Jeff Gordon XS Racing, Freestyle Boardin' 99, Army Men 3D, March Madness 99.

Future Releases

Age of Empires	Psygnosis	Strategy
Alien Resurrection	Fox Interactive	Action
Bass Landing	Ascii	Sports
Battleship	Hasbro Interactive	Simulation
CROC 2	Fox Interactive	Action
Darkstone	Take 2	RPG
Dead Unity	THQ	Action
Diabolical Adventures of Tobu	989 Studios	Action
Earthworm Jim 3	Interplay	Action
Freestyle Boarding	Capcom	Sports
High Heat Baseball	3DO	Sports
Indy Jones and the Infernal Machine	LucasArts	Adventure
Jackie Chan's Stunt Master	Midway	Action
Lost In Time	Infogrames	Adventure
Macross VFX 2	Bandai	Shooter
Messiah	Interplay	Action
Monster Rancher 2	Tecmo	Strategy
Motorcycle Madness	Psygnosis	Racing
Pac-Man 3D	Namco	Action
Point Blank 2	Namco	Shooter
Populous: the Beginning	EA - Bullfrog	Strategy
Pro Pinball: Big Race USA	Empire Interactive	Simulation
Professional Sports Car Racing	Electronic Arts	Racing
R4: Ridge Racer Type 4	Namco	Racing
Rat Attack	Mindscape	Action
Rayman 2	Ubi Soft	Action
Revolt	Acclaim	Racing
Reel Fishing 2	Natsume	Sports
Saboteur	Eidos	Action
Shadowman	Acclaim	Action
Shao Lin	THQ	Fighting
Snow Racer	Infogrames	Racing
Soldner'schild	Koei	Action
South Park	Acclaim	Action
Star Trek: Klingon Academy	Interplay	Simulation
Superbikes	Electronic Arts	Sports
The Golf Pro	Empire Interactive	Sports
Urban Assault	Psygnosis	Action
Urban Chaos	Eidos	Action
Vermin	Eidos	Action
Viper	Infogrames	Action

All release dates are tentative and subject to change. More information on all future releases will be given as it becomes available.

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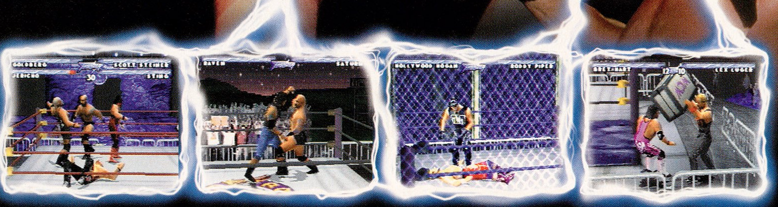
WCW
nWo
SM
THUNDER


GOLDBERG
SCOTT STEINER
JERICHO
STING
30
RAVEN
SATUR
HOLLYWOOD HOGAN
RODDY PIPER
BRET HART
LEX LUGER
12
10

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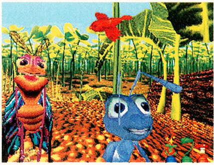
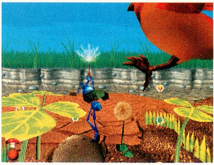
(It's a video game, too.)

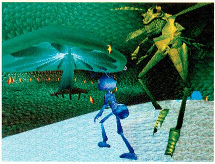
The ultimate bug movie is now the ultimate video game. And Flik, the ant, needs your help battling an army of pesky insects through 15 stunning 3-D environments. *A Bug's Life* video game is an action-packed adventure that'll have you swinging, flying and sliding in a world seen through the eyes of an ant. In other words, it's an epic of miniature proportions.

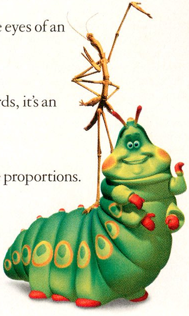
Disney • PIXAR

a bug's life









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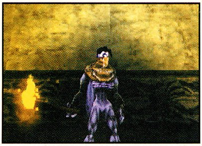
Theme	Adventure	**# of Players**	1
% Complete	50%	**Availability**	January
Publisher	Eidos	**Developer**	Crystal Dynamics

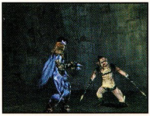
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver

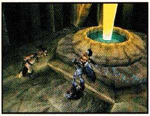
Nosgoth gets spiritual as Crystal's vampire-hunting adventure nears completion



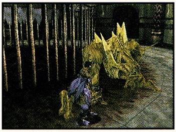
So now you've seen Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver in action (see issue #13's demo disc); you've seen the impressive 3D engine, the realistic textures, the hand-to-hand combat. You may think you have a good idea of what this game will have to offer once it's finally released in January. Well, smarty, think again; you ain't seen nothing yet.

One of the most fundamental innovations in the game—the Spectral Plane—wasn't even present in the demo, and this is something that must be seen to be believed. Every single location in this new 3D Nosgoth has a counterpart on the Spectral Plane. Our hero Raziel, being partly a being of spirit, is able to shift from the Material Plane to the Spectral Plane, and back. Why, you ask, would he want to do that? There are a number of reasons.





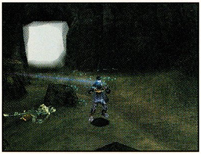
First, locations in the Spectral Plane are slightly different than in the Material. A crack in a wall, for example, may turn into a hole big enough to walk through. A floor may become an exit. Or a ledge that's a bit too high to grab may move within reach. Once Raziel triggers this shift—a spell, of sorts—these small adjustments happen in real time, which is an impressive graphical effect. This effect was so revolutionary that Crystal Dynamics would not allow screenshots or video of the process to be taken until very recently.

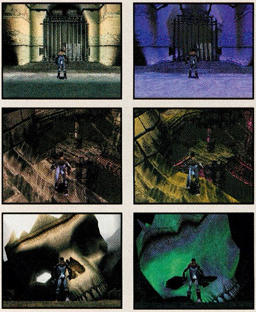


One of the first bosses revealed to the public is this Lovecraftian behemoth lurking in a blood-splattered caged arena.

But that's not all that's turned up in the game since our last update. More enemies, including some bosses, have been inserted; and while not all of them behave as they should, the graphics and animation are just beautiful.

Also introduced are new combat elements, like the ability to pick up torches to use as a weapon. Seeing enemies go up in a sudden burst of flame is most satisfying. Enemy vampires can also be thrown into shafts of sunlight, where they disintegrate on contact.



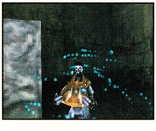


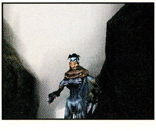
Paradigm Shift

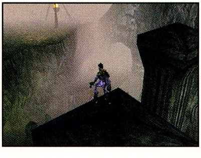
At last we can show the impressive shift to the Spectral Plane. As you can see, the lighting changes dramatically, and nearly every surface morphs to a slightly different position. What you can't see is that this all happens in real time; in motion, the process is very impressive.

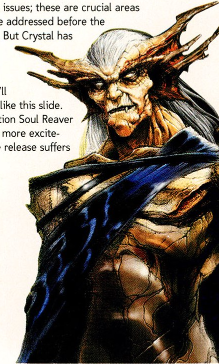
We're still seeing lots of experimentation with controls and camera issues; these are crucial areas that will hopefully be addressed before the game's final release. But Crystal has underscored the importance of these issues from the beginning, and they'll surely not let things like this slide.

With each incarnation Soul Reaver generates more and more excitement. Let's hope the release suffers no more delays.









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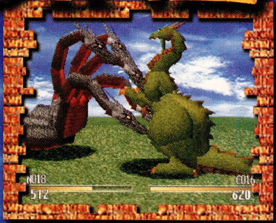
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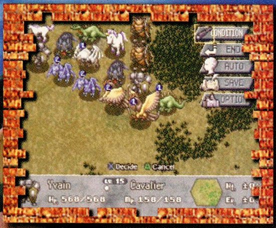
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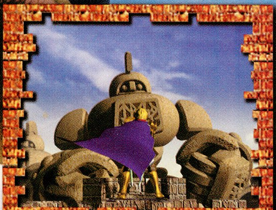
Cavalier
HP 568/568
MP 158/158



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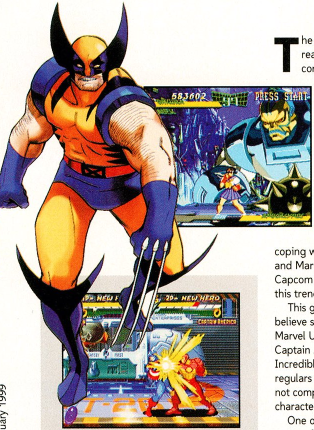
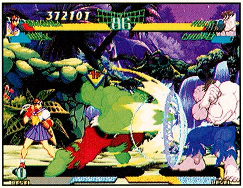
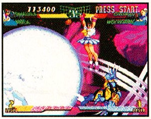
Theme	Fighting	**# of Players**	1-2
% Complete	50%	**Availability**	February
Publisher	Capcom	**Developer**	Capcom

Marvel Vs. Capcom

The biggest names in comics and fighting games settle their differences





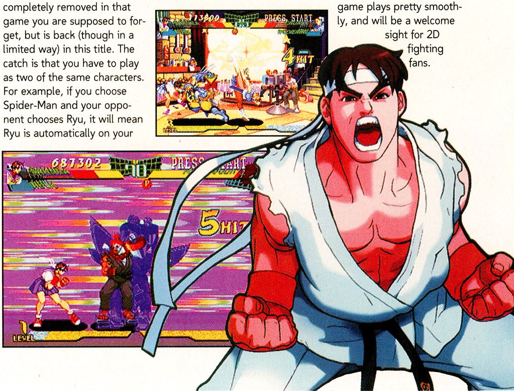


The first thing you need to do before reading further into this preview is to completely block out any memory you may have about the earlier PlayStation port of X-men vs Street Fighter. Is it blocked out yet? Good. Now that you have a clear mind free of resentment and doubt, let us introduce you to the next wave of Capcom 2D fighters on the PlayStation. If you've read the review of Darkstalkers 3 in this issue, you'll know that Capcom has finally managed to incorporate fluid play while coping with missing animation, and Marvel Superheros Vs. Capcom appears to continue this trend.

This game would have you believe superheros from the Marvel Universe like Spider-Man, Captain America and the Incredible Hulk are set to do battle against the regulars of the Street Fighter tournament. (We're not complaining; any excuse to have these cool characters in the same game is OK with us.)

One of the key components of the Versus series of games is the tag team aspect. This was completely removed in that game you are supposed to forget, but is back (though in a limited way) in this title. The catch is that you have to play as two of the same characters. For example, if you choose Spider-Man and your opponent chooses Ryu, it will mean Ryu is automatically on your team and Spider-Man is on his or hers.

The first character you pick will be your primary fighter, the second character will be a support fighter, coming in only for a brief hit or two. It remains to be seen how the finished version will be, but at this stage, the game plays pretty smoothly, and will be a welcome sight for 2D fighting fans.



Marvel Characters In Capcom Fighting Games

So where did all this Marvel madness begin? Well the first title was X-Men: Children of the Atom, which introduced the "loose" variation on the SF engine. Suffice it to say many diehard SF fans were not too happy, but it did introduce players who were familiar with the X-Men to the Capcom fighting universe. Next came Marvel Superheros, which featured some of the cast of X-Men:CotA and added Marvel mainstays like Spider-Man and Captain America. Then came X-Men vs. Street Fighter followed by Marvel vs. Street Fighter and, finally, Marvel Vs. Capcom, which is currently in arcades.

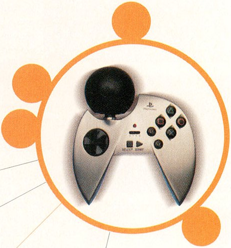
ASK ASCII GUY

Q:

Dear ASCII Guy,
My girlfriend says I'm "2-Dimensional", and all I care about is playing Forsaken™, NFL™ Blitz, and Duke Nukem™ Time To Kill™. I got to thinking about it - and she's right! I am 2-Dimensional. I play 3-D games with a 2-D controller. How can I get some depth?

A:

Don't sweat the chicks my friend. What you need to do is get your hands around the new ASCII Sphere 360°™. It's the only way to really get 3D, and it's the first intuitive 3D controller for the PlayStation® game console. The ASCII Sphere 360° senses all pushes, pulls & twists that you apply to it and translates those commands instantly into fluid, smooth movement. BAM! You're bustin' crazy moves effortlessly. And check this out- games like Forsaken, NFL Blitz, and Duke Nukem Time To Kill are programmed to groove with the ASCII Sphere 360°. With game play like this, who needs a girlfriend anyway?



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TIME TO KILL

SHIELD
FORSAKEN

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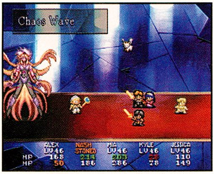
PlayStation

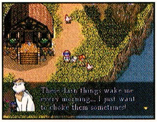
Theme RPG		**# of Players** 1	
% Complete N/A		**Availability** Q1 '99	
Publisher Working Designs		**Developer** Game Arts	

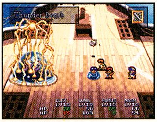
Lunar: Silver Star Story

Everything old is new again

When Lunar: The Silver Star was first released way back in 1992 it was a shinning example of everything an RPG on CD could be. A truly outstanding soundtrack, plenty of real speech, awesome animated cut scenes, and a huge, epic quest all demonstrated what was possible on the exciting new format. The only problem? No one owned the format—the game was released only for the ill-fated Sega CD. Next came an updated version for the Japanese Sega Saturn, but again the system tanked in America and a U.S. version was never even released. It's only now that the updated version of the game is being ported to the PlayStation that Lunar is *finally* at the right place at the right time: on the world's most popular video game system, at a time period (the post-Final Fantasy VII era) when RPGs have never been more accepted in America.




These darn things wake me every morning... I just want to choke them sometimes!



Weapon reflection effects have been enhanced as has the lighting in the various stages.

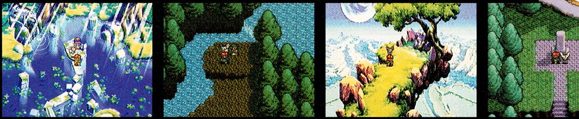
So how can a PlayStation version of some six-year-old 16-Bit game be worth getting excited about? Well first of all, this isn't just any quickly rehashed update; if you are thinking, "ah, another Tales of Destiny," you are way off. Lunar:SSS boasts an impressive list of features both improved from the old version and completely new: about 85 percent of the game's text has been rewritten, parts of the story modified, all new speech recorded, graphics completely redone, and new music composed just for this edition of the game. What remains from the original is the basic structure of the game—the overall plot, the characters, the familiar town and dungeon locales, the turn-based battles. Lunar blends these classic gameplay elements with the all-new audio, video, and even story improvements for a mix that reminds longtime RPG fans of the good ol' days, but can please recent converts to the genre as well. Simply put, Lunar would still be a damn good RPG as it was all those years ago; add all these extras and improvements and you wind up with something really special.

The one catch is that you may have to suffer the agony of anticipation just a bit longer; Lunar was originally scheduled to be released in August and the latest version we got was still fairly early. Working Designs has a bit of a reputation for not sticking to release dates, but they are also known for not rushing things and taking their time for the sake of quality. Hopefully Lunar will continue that tradition when it is released this winter.

Lunar Super Deluxe Set

Check out all the spiffy swag that you get with Lunar : a making-of video CD (including interviews with the Japanese developers, U.S. voice actors, and the crew at Working Designs), an exclusive CD of arranged music from the game, a cloth map, and a hardbound instruction manual which includes the first section of the strategy guide! Oh, yeah, I almost forgot—and the two CDs that make up the actual game of course!

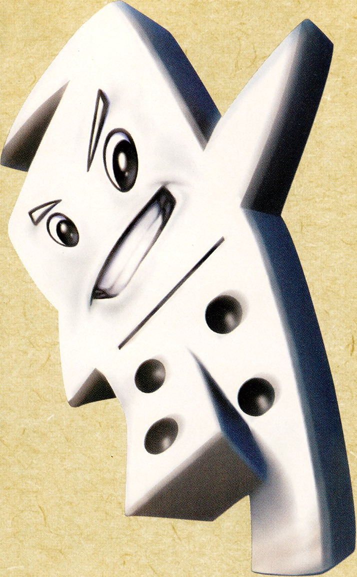
Lunar: This is your Life



To give you a better idea just how far the graphics have come since Lunar's original release, here are some shots from the PlayStation version side-by-side with matching Sega-CD grabs. We think you'll be able to tell which are which.

THE 5 STAGES OF MR. DOMINO ADDICTION

As reported by OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION MAGAZINE



1. CONFUSION

("What the hell is that...?)

2. CONDESCENSION

("heh heh. What a silly little game...")

3. DENIAL

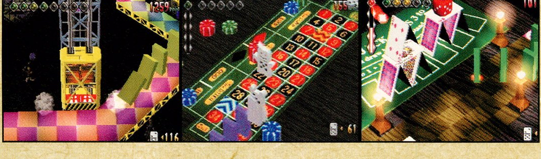
("I'm only playing until the next level.")

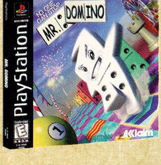
4. ADDICTION

("I'm only playing until I get to the next level
–and this time I mean it. DO YOU HEAR
ME MR. DOMINO?!? ONLY ONE MORE!!!")

5. ACCEPTANCE

("I love you Mr. Domino.")





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www.acclaim.net

It's a different battle
every time you play.
TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

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INF
BMB
AAV
TNK
NST

"Packs serious action - plentiful gameplay with great graphics and sound." - PSM Online

INF
BMB
AAV
TNK
NST

"...one of the most advanced games on the PlayStation." - Gamer's Republic

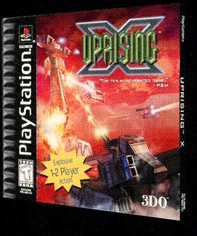
"...unlike anything PlayStation gamers have yet seen." - Gamecenter.com

The smell of burning corpses,
however, never changes.

UPRISING X™

"Plays fast and chaotic. Literally dozens of units can be on the screen at one time, and the battles that take place are epic."
- PSM

- Virtually unlimited replayability. Unbelievable destruction.
- Command massive brigades of sci-fi troops, tanks, gunships and bombers.
- Explosive 2-player action — unload hi-tech firepower against a friend.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Explosive 1-2 Player action
3DO
UPRISING™ X

PlayStation

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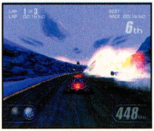
Theme Action	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 50%	**Availability** April 99
Publisher Psygnosis	**Developer** ATD

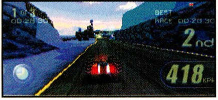
Rollcage

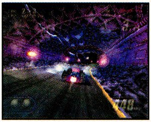
Rock and tumble with Psygnosis' new and unique futuristic racer

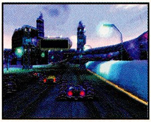


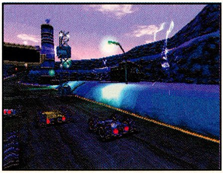
Use explosions to speed up.

2 of 3
1st
312









Let's face it—there just aren't many original racing games these days. And there's even fewer futuristic ones. That's why we're so happy to introduce you to Rollcage, a racing game that actually brings something new to the table.

Although at first glance it might look like a WipeOut rip-off, Rollcage is much more. Take a look at the vehicles and you'll notice that their tops and bottoms are roughly identical That's because you'll be using both the top and bottom of your indestructible car to drive on. And oh, is it fun being indestructible. It's quite useful too.

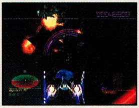
To gain the advantage in Rollcage, you can use a variety of weapons to slow down your opponents, or you can use them to speed you up. Being that your car is indestructible, blowing up things around the track is of great use since you can use the explosion to speed you up. Need a boost of speed? Take a building-killing missile and level the structure right next to you. It takes a lot of skill however. Rollcage's tracks contain lots of dips and bends, and if you get knocked around at the wrong time by an explosion enough you can find yourself bouncing all over the track while your rivals speed by you.

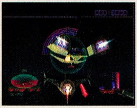
The game promises lots of variety with six different vehicles, 11 different tracks and four racing environments. Also, there will be lots of hidden secret, a two-player split screen mode, and a deathmatch arena.

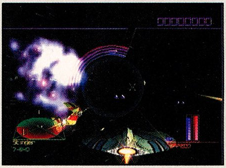
Theme Action	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 85%	**Availability** February
Publisher Psygnosis	**Developer** Psygnosis

Blast Radius

Colony Wars without all the fixin's







It's no coincidence that Blast Radius looks a lot like Colony Wars.

This winter, Psygnosis plans to follow up their recently released Colony Wars Vengeance with Blast Radius, a 3D shooter that's been in the works since 1997. While the heart of Blast Radius seems to be the same (fantastic) polygon engine shared by Colony Wars, the game feels less like a campaign and more like a series of levels that caters more toward casual players of the same genre.

Players assume the role of Kayne, the sole surviving member of the legendary Wolf Squadron who must defend the besieged worlds of the Vorn from the tyranny of the tyrannical Kotan-Kai. Blast Radius promises to have an ambitious space opera story spanning 10 different sectors for a total of 40 missions. As a mercenary, Kayne has the ability to buy and upgrade weapons within each sector. Adding to the sense that Blast Radius is more shooter than space simulator, vanquished enemies release power-ups that provide players with added health, shields or bounty bonuses.

Blast Radius features high-resolution polygons which move at a steady 30-frames-per second, even during the most harrowing dogfights amidst clusters of capital ships. Psygnosis even included a link cable mode that allows two players to engage in co-op or deathmatch modes. A strange omission in the game however, is the baffling lack of Dual Shock support and the inability to use the second analog stick as a throttle. Control issues aside, 3D shooter fans should definitely check out Blast Radius, and since it's made by Psygnosis, there's always a gratuitous amount of lens flare and lightsourcing to admire.

SCREW the warranty...

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fly
TEST DRIVE
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Test Drive Off-Road 2, the only 4-wheeling experience that's guaranteed to get you high.

- Hummer® exclusive- The only place you'll drive the world famous Hummer
- Awesome Soundtrack Featuring: Sevendust, Gravity Kills, and Fear Factory
- Dual Shock® Analog Controller support- Vibration so real, you risk whiplash!
- World Tour mode- Blow away your competition in any of 6 different truck classes to open hidden tracks and buy new vehicles and/or upgrades.
- 12 gnarly tracks in 6 real world locations- Go muddoggin', spray rooster tails, blow snow, churn up sand and surf- or bash, crash and smash your opponents into boulders, trees, cliffs or mud pits.
- Choose from 20 killer vehicles!- Including all your favorite off-road behemoths- Dodge® Ram, Ford Explorer,™ Jeep® Wrangler, Ford F-150,™ Chenowth (FAV), Jeep® Grand Cherokee, Dodge® T-Rex and more...

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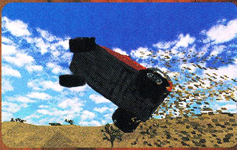
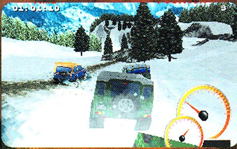
Fun, fun, fun in the mud, mud, mud!

Race from the Alps to the beaches of Hawaii


Catch serious air off insane jumps



Off-Road mayhem at its best!

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SEVENDUST GRAVITY KILLS TVT RECORDS EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB PlayStation

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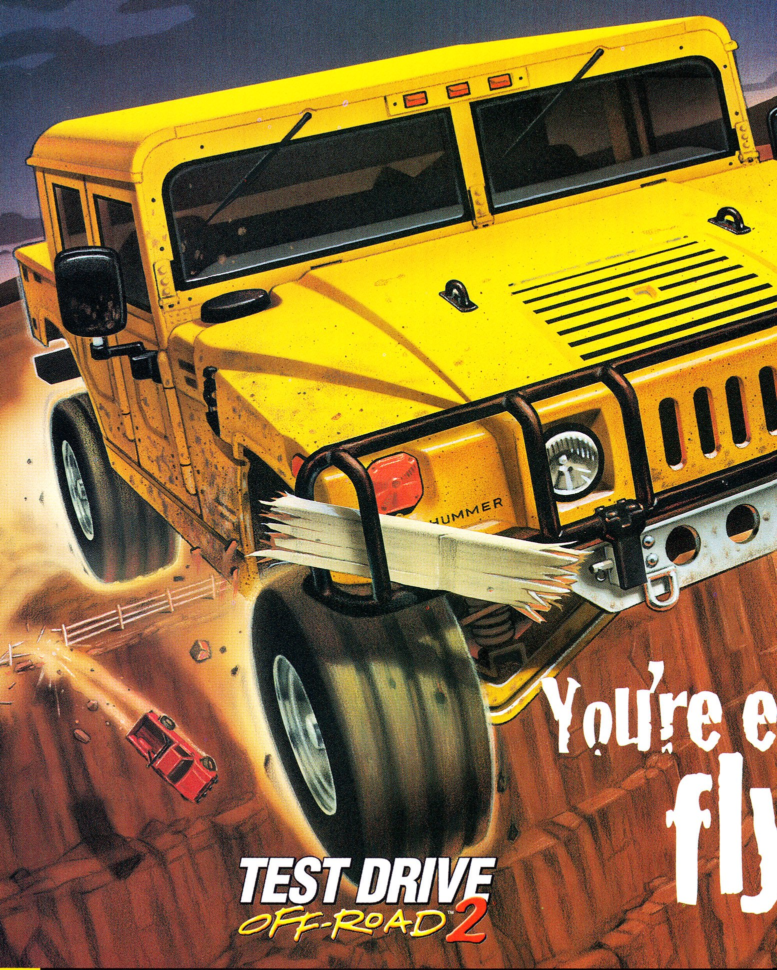

Test Drive Off-Road 2, the only 4-wheeling experience that's guaranteed to get you high.

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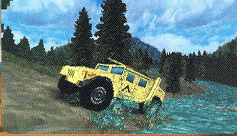
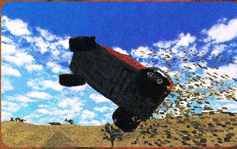


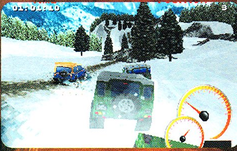
Win the World Tour and upgrade your 4x4

Fun, fun, fun in the mud, mud, mud!

Race from the Alps to the beaches of Hawaii



Catch serious air off insane jumps



Off-Road mayhem at its best!

TEST DRIVE OFF-ROAD 2
ACCOLADE
PlayStation

SEVENDUST GRAVITY KILLS TVT RECORDS EVERYONE CONTENT RATED BY ESRB PlayStation

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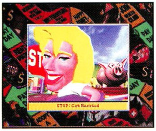
Theme	Misc.	**# of Players**	1-6
% Complete	85%	**Availability**	January
Publisher	Hasbro	**Developer**	Artech Studios

The Game Of LIFE

The old board game gets a facelift and more


STOP: Get Married

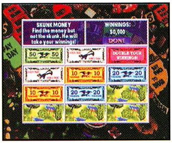
You got married! Meet your new...er....um...just which sex is that supposed to be exactly?

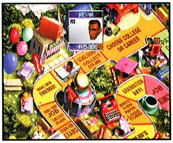
Remember the little plastic mountains, the tiny cars and peg people of The Game of LIFE? Well now the classic board game is back, with both the old standard game and an all-new version just for the PlayStation both on one CD.

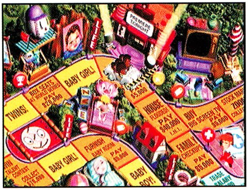
The basic premise is the same whichever version you choose—a race to see who can finish with the most money—and you still grab a job, a spouse and kids along the way. But now as you travel across the board you pass through different decades, starting with the '50s and ending up in the year 2000, with appropriate music from each era. Also, instead of just picking up LIFE cards, the enhanced version has a series of different minigames to determine your rewards.

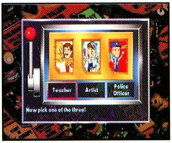
LIFE has an all-new look and expanded size for the PlayStation version as well. When you move it's from a first-person perspective (like you are really behind the wheel of your little car), and each square has a short, humorous (well, they try to be anyway) FMV cutscene or picture for the events you go through. Options for turning off all of these load-intensive features are included, so if you just want to sit down and have a quick game you can do that too.

While board game conversions like this won't appeal to everyone, people looking for a party game or something the whole family can play should keep an eye on LIFE.


SKUNK MONEY
Find the money but not the skunk. He will take your winnings!
WINNINGS:
$0,000
DONE
DOUBLE YOUR WINNINGS!


KEVIN
CHOOSE COLLEGE OR CAREER
GRADUATION DAY!
JOB

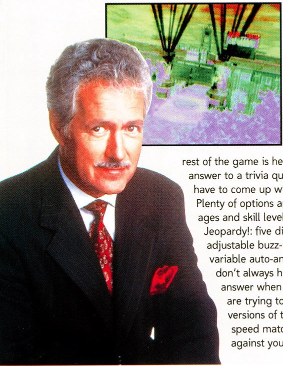

PREMIERE TONIGHT
BABY GIRL!
TWINS!
HOUSE FLOODED! PAY $40,000
FAMILY CHECKUPS PAY $5,000
BABY GIRL!
BABY BOY!
FURNISH BABY ROOM PAY $5,000


Teacher
Artist
Police Officer
Now pick one of the three!

Theme	Misc.	**# of Players**	1-3
% Complete	85%	**Availability**	January
Publisher	Hasbro	**Developer**	Artech Studios

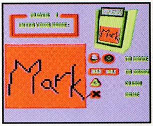
Jeopardy!

What is the newest TV game show-to-PlayStation conversion?

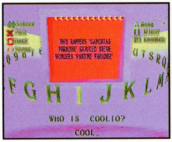


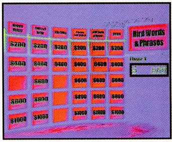
There are few things in life that will always be there: death, taxes and new Jeopardy! video games. They have been with us since the 8-Bit days and probably will be around long into the 21st century, with Alex Trebek's preserved brain hosting the show from inside his cryo-tank, deep within his secret Canadian mountain lair.

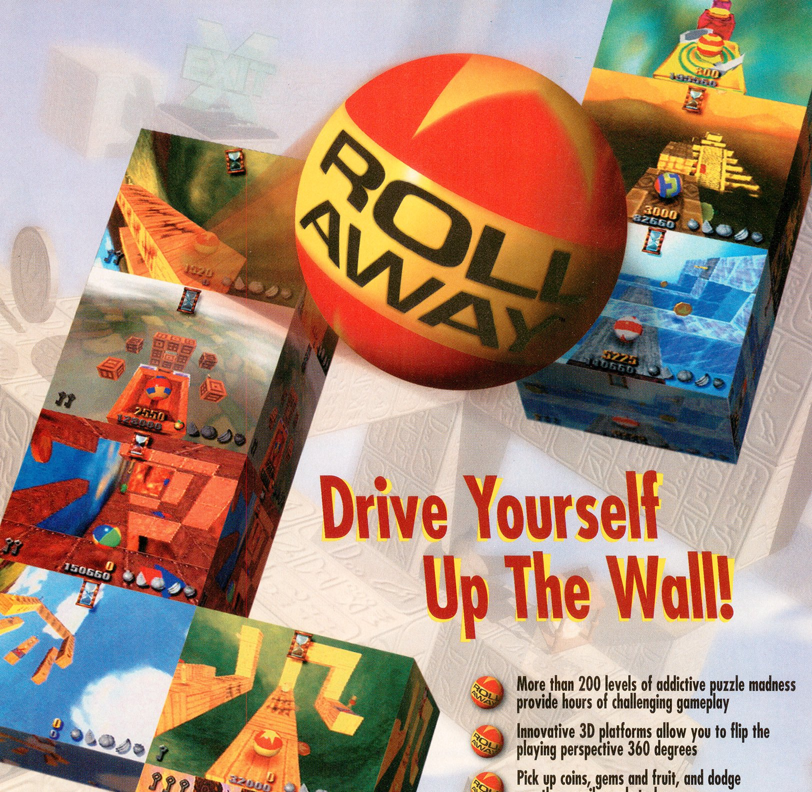
For now, though, Alex and the rest of the game is here just as you see it on TV—you get the answer to a trivia question from various categories and have to come up with the question that matches it. Plenty of options are included to help players of all ages and skill levels get the most out of Jeopardy!: five different skill levels, adjustable buzz-in and response times, and variable auto-answer completion, so you don't always have to type in the whole answer when it's obvious what you are trying to say. There are also two versions of the game—a one-player speed match where you compete against yourself, and the standard game of 1-3 players, with any empty spots taken over by computer contestants. The one option the game still needs most, however, is the ability to disable the tiny FMV clips that appear after every answer. All that loading slows the game down to a crawl, especially compared to the lightning pace of the TV show. Since Wheel of Fortune (also from Hasbro Interactive) includes this feature, we can only hope Jeopardy! gets it as well before its release this month.


PLAYER 1
ENTER YOUR NAME:
Mark

You can even draw in your own name and have it look like it was done by a 2nd grader, just like they always do on TV!


THIS RAPPERS 'GAROSTAS PARADISE' SAMPLED STEVIE WONDERS 'PASTIME PARADISE'
F G H I J K L M
WHO IS COOLIO?
COOL


Bird Words & Phrases
Player 1
$200
$400
$600
$800
$1000



Drive Yourself Up The Wall!

- More than 200 levels of addictive puzzle madness provide hours of challenging gameplay
- Innovative 3D platforms allow you to flip the playing perspective 360 degrees
- Pick up coins, gems and fruit, and dodge countless perilous obstacles
- Test your memory against a friend in the 2-player "Copy Cat" mode

PlayStation
ROLL AWAY
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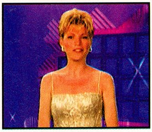
Theme Puzzle	**# of Players** 1-3
% Complete 85%	**Availability** January
Publisher Hasbro	**Developer** Artech

Wheel of Fortune

Big wheel keeps on turnin'

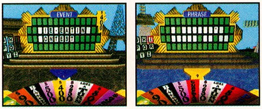


The Wheel is back, and this time its chock-full 'o Vanna!

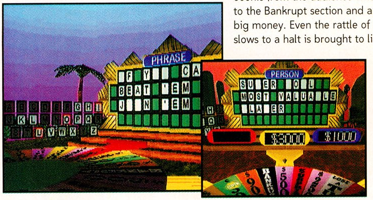
One of the most important things in making these TV game show titles work as video games is authenticity—making players feel like they are actually there in the studio. This point obviously wasn't lost on Hasbro Interactive. Most everything you know from *Wheel of Fortune* has been carefully reconstructed for their latest PlayStation game: the familiar voice of Charley O'Donnel welcoming you as the game begins, the chatter of computer opponents as they spin the big wheel ("OK, c'mon now!"), tense oooh!s from the audience when you get close to the Bankrupt section and applause for the big money. Even the rattle of the wheel as it slows to a halt is brought to life with Dual Shock vibration support.

The one big difference is that Pat Sajak is mysteriously missing, and in his place hosting the proceedings is letter-turner extraordinaire Vanna White. Through both voice and short FMV snippets, Vanna will pop up from time to time to say whose turn it is, who is winning, how many R's there are, etc. Luckily the developers realized that this little "feature" could lose its novelty quickly and slow the game down with a lot of useless loading time, so they included an option to disable it

Other options include multiplayer (up to three players including computer opponents) and solo versions of the game, either timed or limited to a selectable number of rounds. Wheel fans should expect the best version of their favorite game show yet.



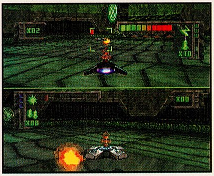
Spin the wheel in exciting foreign locales like Paris (left) and Holland (right). What's the difference, you ask? Why, the stage props of course!



Theme Action	**# of Players** 1-2
% Complete 80%	**Availability** January
Publisher Psygnosis	**Developer** Psygnosis

Eliminator

Prisoners square off in a Twisted Metal of the future



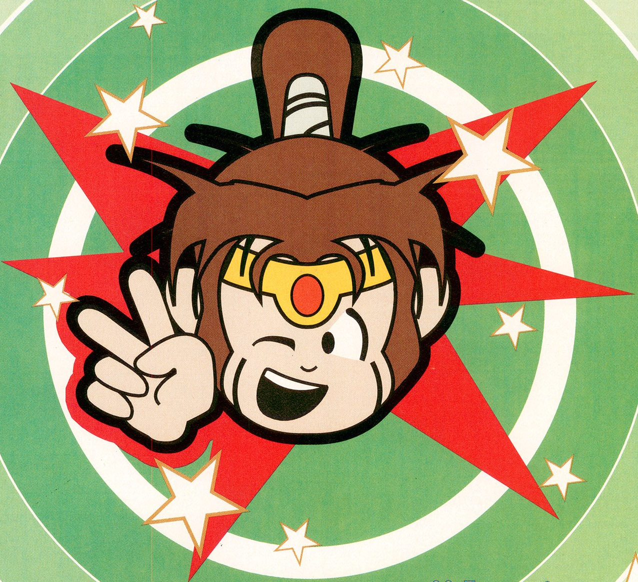
Battle takes place in claustrophobic arenas, making for intense fire-fights. Especially in two-player competitions.

Eliminator is one of those action titles that immediately bring to mind other games. This little-hyped Psygnosis title takes the mayhem of a Twisted Metal, combines it with the play mechanics of something like Namco's Cybersled, and sets the fray in the ambience of a dark futuristic Smash TV-style arena dome.

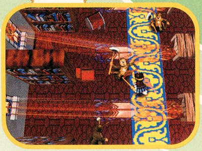
In a dark and unsavory future, prisoner inmates are thrown into an arena on a forsaken penal colony to fight for their survival for the entertainment of a bloodthirsty general public. Players are given a hovercraft with which to negotiate through a complex labyrinth of drones and threats. Littered along the way to ultimate freedom is an assortment of weapons, shields, heath and time bonuses. While some of the enemies are mildly difficult to beat down, the real challenge lies in the time limit allotted to complete each level. When the timer reaches zero: "boom" time to restart from the last checkpoint. While the a split-screen two-player deathmatch mode was a nice addition, it appears to offer no new twists to the formula.

What Eliminator lacks in aesthetic design and superfluous graphics it slightly makes up for in the gameplay department. Eliminator's rhythm is fast-paced and the action can get intense but the controls themselves elicit mixed reactions. The hovercraft travels and strafes in every which way but controls are hampered by an unintuitive button arrangement. Despite some of these flaws, Eliminator has the potential to make an impact with fans of vehicular mayhem.

monkey hero



Half rock, half monkey, all hero!



With an eye for excitement and a nose for nonsense, Monkey Hero is one funky monkey. Join Monkey as he explores massive dungeons and battles legions of baddies in a crusade to restore peace among the Three Worlds. It's a good thing he's one tough monkey.

PC CD ROM

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PlayStation

blam!

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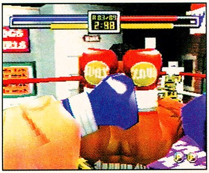
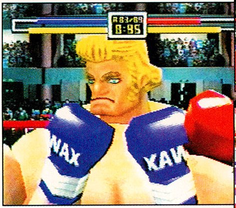
TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE SOFTWARE

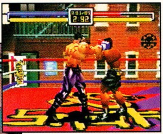
Theme Sports	**# of Players** 1-2	**% Complete** 40%
Availability January	**Publisher** SCEA	**Developer** Victor Int.

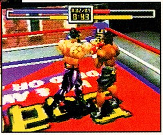
Contender

For those not interested in a serious boxing simulation, this game is for you. Contender features fast-paced arcade gameplay, 20 different boxers, and the option to create your own fighters.



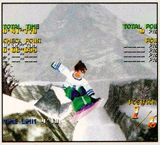


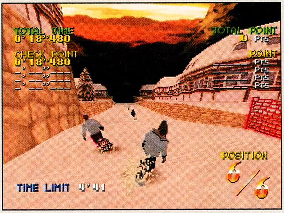




Freestyle Boardin' '99

Developers have been asking themselves how to make a boarding game that stands out from the crowd. For Capcom, the answer is to add RPG elements, letting players build their boarder's prowess over time. Interesting...

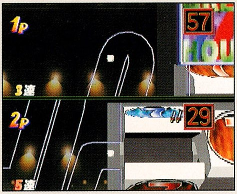




Theme Sports	**# of Players** 1-2	**% Complete** 90%
Availability Feb.	**Publisher** Capcom	**Developer** TV Tokyo

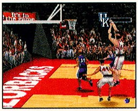
Irritating Stick

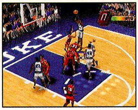
The title of this game couldn't have been more appropriate. The gameplay involves moving the tip of your sword (said stick) through an electrically charged 2D labyrinth without touching the walls. When you hit a wall you are shocked (with all the Dual Shock power of your controller) and must start back at the beginning. Irritating, isn't it?

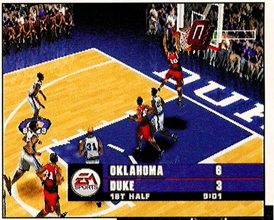


Theme Misc.	**# of Players** 1-8
% Complete 85%	**Availability** January
Publisher Jaleco	**Developer** Saurus

Theme Sports	**# of Players** 1-8
% Complete 80%	**Availability** Q1 '99
Publisher Electronic Arts	**Developer** Electronic Arts

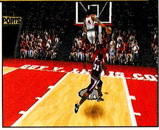




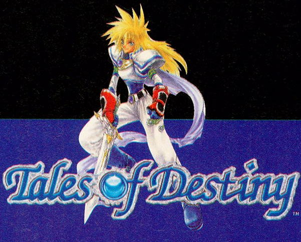


March Madness 99

Right on schedule comes the latest addition to EA's college basketball franchise. Loaded with over 100 Division I teams, March Madness should have you covered if you're a hoops fan. New features include improved 3D graphics, better computer intelligence (last year's was horrible), a Three-Point Shootout, and a Practice Mode. There will also be an Arcade Mode for casual fans.



IT'S WHY YOU STARTED PLAYING RPG'S IN THE FIRST PLACE.



It's time you met your destiny. Tales of Destiny delivers everything the true aficionado of the RPG genre could want and more. Journey the high seas in search of the lost secrets of the ancient Aetherians. Wield weapons so powerful they develop their own intelligence and will. Cast more than 100 amazing spells in real time, making enemies and monsters fear your wrath. Soar through the skies on a fantastic dragon ship, searching for your next adventure. Tales of Destiny. A true RPG crafted with the RPG connoisseur in mind.

TEEN T AGES 13+ CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PlayStation

namco®

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RALLY CROSS® 2

Experience the rush of full-throttle 3D off-road racing as never before with ten all new, fully-customizable rally cars and trucks, eight extreme courses, killer sounds from Guttermouth, Wick and One Hit Wonder, plus complete compatibility with the Dual Shock™ Analog Controller. Create your own off-road experience or edit an existing course with the revolutionary Rally Cross 2 track editor. Think you own the road? You may be right.

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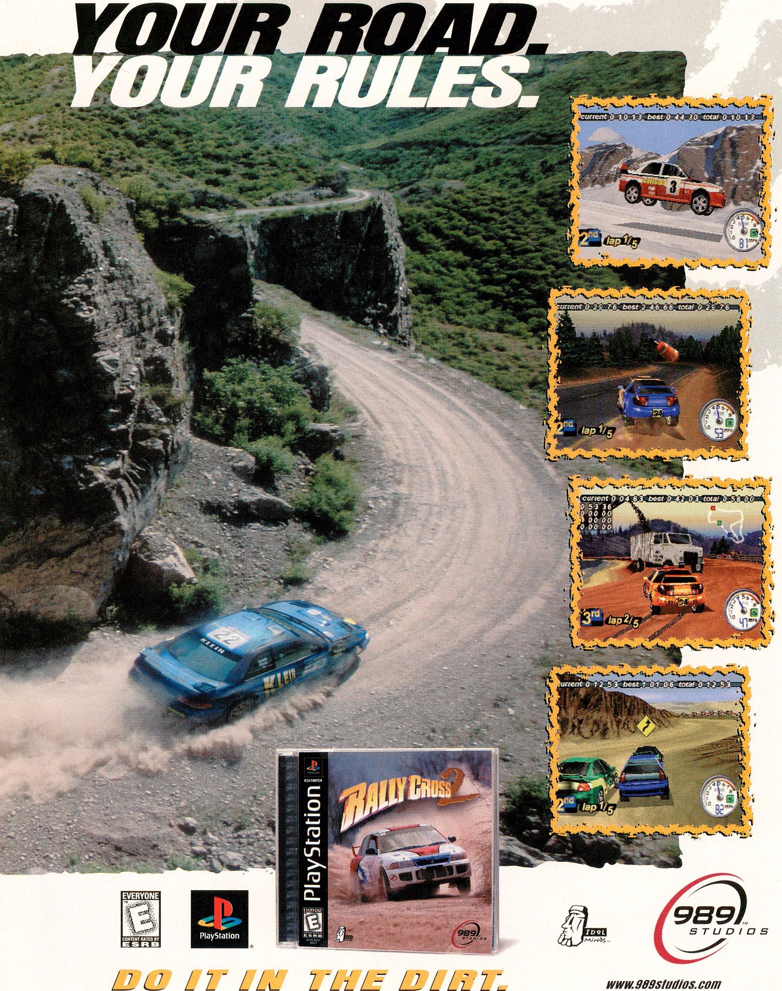
YOUR ROAD.
YOUR RULES.
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PlayStation
IDOL MINDS
989 STUDIOS
DO IT IN THE DIRT.
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Tidbits

Capcom Generations Volume 2

Capcom, Availability: Now

Probably the most eagerly anticipated of all the Generations series of classic Capcom game collections, Volume 2 is a nostalgic trip through the famous Ghosts 'N' games. The original arcade Ghosts 'N' Goblins and the sequel Ghouls 'N' Ghosts are here and perfect for the first time on a home system, as well as the classic hit for the Super Nintendo, Super Ghouls 'N' Ghosts. In case you somehow never heard of these games, they are some of the best action-platformers ever made and are the cornerstones many modern games were built on. OK, so they may look a little dowdy by today's standards (especially the first game), but the gameplay hasn't lost a thing even after all these years.

Challenging and addictive, with all sorts of different weapons, power-ups and huge pattern bosses, the GNG world merits revisiting.

PLAYER-1
TOP SCORE
PLAYER-2

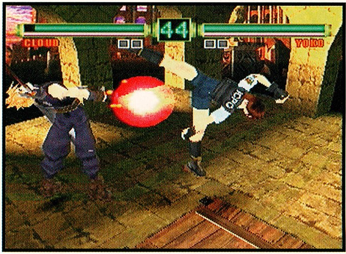
Zeus : Carnage Heart Second

Artdink, Availability: Now

The sequel to the cult hit robot building sim Carnage Heart is just out in Japan, and like the first game lets you design, build, program, and even paint your own robot warriors.

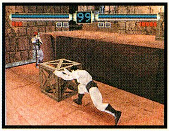
Ehrgeiz

Square



If you think all fighting games are alike nowadays, you certainly can't blame Square. Both of the fighting series they have established have challenged the status quo of the genre—Bushido Blade with its large open arenas and one-hit kills, and Tobal with its RPG-influenced Quest Mode. Square's newest fighter, Ehrgeiz, codeveloped by DreamFactory (makers of Tobal 1 and 2) and Namco, continues this challenge to convention with an unprecedented amount of extras and minigames added just for the PlayStation version.

There are, of course, new playable characters (three more than in the arcade), but that's almost expected in a home version these days—even if they are Yuffie, Vincent and Sephiroth from Final Fantasy VII. More surprising are at least three new modes of play besides the standard fighting—Battle Runner, Battle Beach and Quest Mode.



Battle Runner is an interesting combination of racing and fighting. The goal is to complete a set number of laps around a track before your opponent, the catch being that both players can still attack each other just like in the normal game. Further complicating things are power-ups that appear randomly and can reverse the direction you need to run to make laps, increase your speed or swap the hit points of the two players.

Battle Beach is a little less offensively oriented and a bit more like straight track and field events. It's a race to the finish in either a straight button-pressing dash or with hurdles you need to clear by timing jumps along the way down a beach course.

Last is the Quest Mode, which appears from the early pictures to be similar to its namesakes in Tobal 1 and 2. Pick a fighter to adventure through a town and dungeons, fighting monsters with the same techniques you use in the normal fighting game, only this time you can equip yourself with a sword, shield and other items.

And don't forget, all this is in addition to an already outstanding one-on-one 3D fighting game. If you've seen Ehrgeiz in the arcade, you have a good idea what it looks like on the PlayStation—the port is that good. The graphics are some of the best the PlayStation has ever seen, sporting a high resolution yet still moving incredibly smooth.

The 3D arenas and objects look great and factor into gameplay; you can jump on walls, push crates around and use both to avoid your opponent's attacks.

Hopefully we will get word on a US release soon since, as you can see, Ehrgeiz has a lot more to offer than just another fighting game.

Theme Fighting **# of Players** 1-2
Availability Now **Developer** DreamFactory

BATTLE RUNNER
START
GOAL!

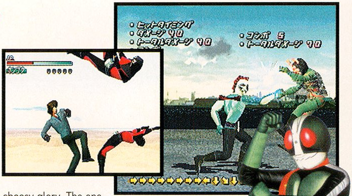
Kamen Rider

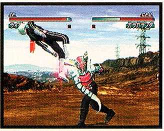
Bandai

Although you may have seen him recently in horribly patched-together segments of the children's TV show *Masked Rider*, Kamen Rider has a much greater significance in Japan as a sort of cult icon from a popular '60s TV show. Think of him like the old Adam West "Ker-pow!" Batman and you've got the idea.

Rather than pretend that the TV series was ever more than a campy throwaway, the Masked Rider game celebrates it in all its cheesy glory. The one-player Story Mode follows the *Power Rangers*-esque original show faithfully, with the hero fighting nameless henchmen two at a time before transforming into the Masked Rider and confronting the boss. After each battle you see a "Next week on Kamen Rider clip'," i.e. scenes of you fighting whoever your next opponent is. All the rubber suits and hilarious sounds have been left as is for maximum effect as well; the game even pretends to cut to commercial to mask loading times.

As far as the actual gameplay goes, it's no Tekken 3, but with a variety of special moves, combos and even a training section, it's better than you'd think. Rider kick!





Theme Fighting **# of Players** 1-2
Availability Now **Developer** Kaze

Final Fantasy VIII

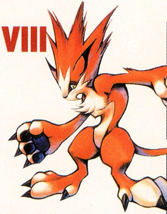
Square

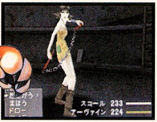
You didn't think we were going to go a whole month without mentioning Final Fantasy VIII, did you? Seriously, a lot of interesting new info and pics have been released on Square's next super RPG, so let's get right to it, shall we?

First is this cute little furry guy called Moomba. At some point in the game you'll have the chance to help out this desert-dwelling creature and he will aid your party in return. It's said that he can acquire the characteristics of any monster by tasting its blood—perhaps letting him use their attacks like Rage in FF3? He could turn out to be the Moogle-type mascot for the game as well.

An additional two playable characters have also been introduced: the shotgun-toting cowboy Irvine Kinneas and the nunchaku wielding Selphie Tilmitt. It appears they join you during your captivity in a desert prison.

Finally we have this shot of Squall and Rinoa dancing at a ball held at the Garden military academy they both attend. Squall is wearing the uniform of a full soldier—perhaps he just graduated? Looks like these two will fit in nicely with FFVIII's official theme of love, eh?

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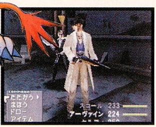
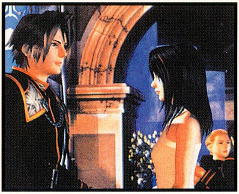


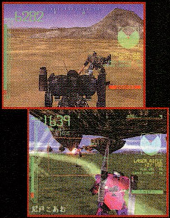


Theme RPG **# of Players** 1
Availability Feb.11 **Developer** Square

Armored Core : Master of Arena

From Software, Availability: Feb. '99

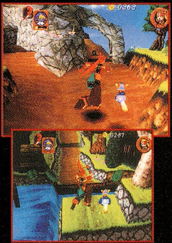
The third and latest in the Armored Core series of mech shooting games, Master of Arena so far looks a lot like its earlier two counterparts. You can still custom build your own robots and test them in mission-based combat or one-on-one fights against a friend, but so far little else seems to have changed. Hopefully the newest AC will have more to offer than just slightly improved graphics when it comes out this winter in Japan.



Ling Rise

Ascii, Availability: December

From out of nowhere comes this interesting new action RPG from Ascii. Ling Rise is fully 3D, with jumping and platform sections, but also with the items, shops and quests you'd expect from any RPG. The big emphasis of the game is on the cute little pets called Lings who accompany you on your adventures. Each Ling has a different elemental power such as wind, earth or fire, but you can only use one at a time so you'll have to choose carefully.



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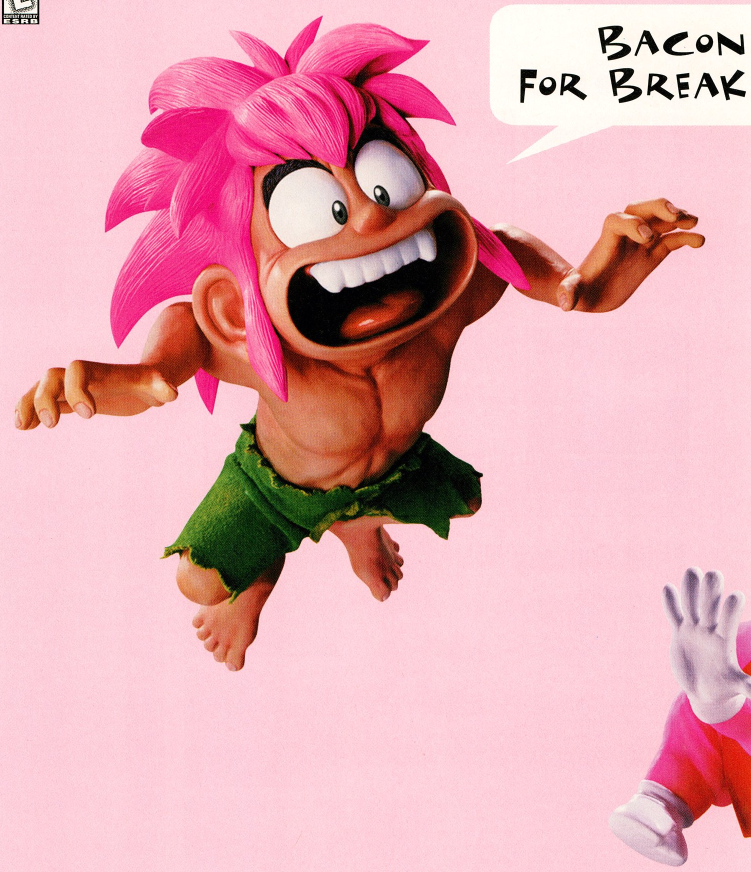

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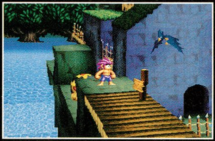
ISN'T JUST FAST ANYMORE.

PlayStation



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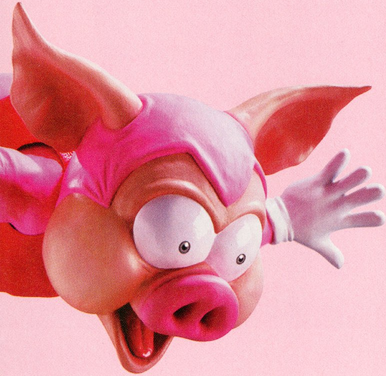

Evil pigs. Hidden paths. Enchanting worlds. And man-eating plants. Can you believe what Tomba™ has to go through to conquer the evil swine? Fortunately, he's got a bunch of weapons and tons of spunk. Tomba's here. And it's the first wild action game with role-playing adventure mixed in, too. (You'll love Tomba even more than a BLT on rye.)

TOMBA!™

www.playstation.com

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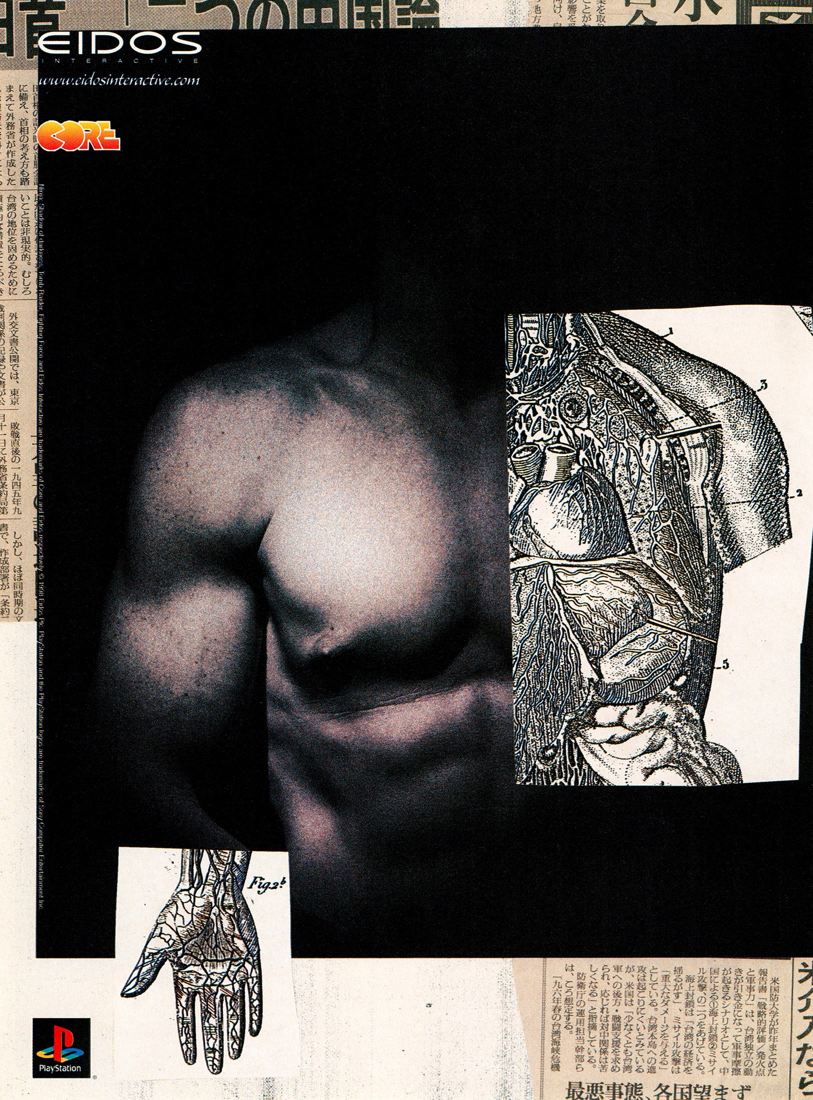
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Fig.2!
PlayStation

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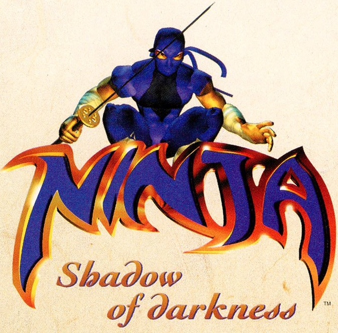
To hell with the fittest. Surviving with your organs intact is victory enough.



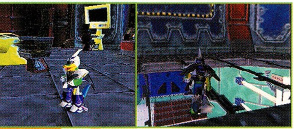
From the creators of Tomb Raider and Fighting Force.

Spike-filled pits. Falling boulders. Rolling logs. You'd be amazed how they can ruin the most routine assassination. Even for a cunning and ruthless ninja like yourself. Fortunately, your arsenal of weapons, magic and moves help you do whatever it takes to forge across 10 levels of treacherous wilderness. To assist you in destroying every demon and warlord in all ancient Japan. To survive — whether it be fit or partially maimed.

THE JOY OF GEX

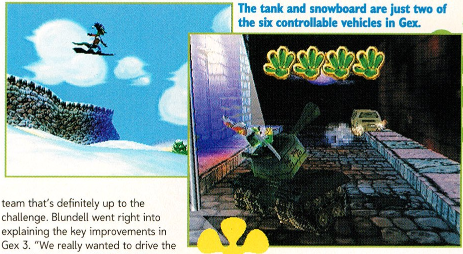
GEX takes on **CRASH** and **SPYRO** with the help of a Baywatch vixen

"This isn't just Gex 2.5, this is Gex 3," surmised Chip Blundell, product marketing manager at Crystal Dynamics. "Part of what happened when we developed Gex 2 is that people along the way came up with so many killer ideas that we couldn't implement them without screwing up the game schedule. Going into Gex 3 we had a lot of ammo to start with. The big thing that was really important for us was to make sure everything is all new." That's good news, because gamers will no longer accept a sequel with a few tweaks and improvements given the sudden increase of quality in PlayStation platform games as of late. But it wasn't always this way. When Gex 2 arrived a year ago, it was easily one of the top 3D PlayStation platform games among a very weak field of competitors.



In the past few months, however, the PlayStation has seen a noticable influx of great 3D platform games ranging from Spyro the Dragon to the absolutely brilliant Crash Bandicoot: Warped. There are even some 2D/3D hybrids, like Tomba! and Klonoa, that have raised some eyebrows. Suffice to say, the next installment of the Gex franchise, Gex: Deep Cover Gecko, is going up against the toughest competition it has ever faced on the PlayStation.

OPM visited the Crystal Dynamics offices to find out how things were shaping up for their franchise gecko and found an enthusiastic (and large) Gex 3 team that's definitely up to the challenge. Blundell went right into explaining the key improvements in Gex 3. "We really wanted to drive the character's personality in Gex 3, and by that we mean using over-the-top animations at the end of levels, the beginning of levels, and his idles [animations that display when Gex isn't moving]. We thought we did a good job of that in Gex 2, but we really want to blow that out in Gex 3. We wanted to create a richer environment for Gex. We also wanted to go back to the story, and make sure it's driven throughout the game so that you don't lose that suspension of disbelief. You're in the game and you know why you're there. It's not just, suddenly there's the story, you're thrown in the game, you have to solve puzzles, you're out of the level, now let's go to next level. There's definitely the reward of interacting with Agent Xtra in the mission to ultimately save her."



The tank and snowboard are just two of the six controllable vehicles in Gex.

Wait a minute. Agent Xtra?

Oh yes, the one thing that Gex can automatically top his rivals with is his sexy new partner, Agent Xtra, played by Marliece Andrada. She can often be seen basking in the sun on the sandy beaches of the legendary TV series *Baywatch* (and gracing *OPM* covers). And it's your duty to save her in Gex 3. Blundell gives us the lowdown:"She's sort of a Moneypenny-type character giving Gex jovial comments throughout the game." The heck with those. If Miss Moneypenny looked even remotely like this, James Bond would never

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Gex vs. Godzilla

There's only room for one superstar reptile. May the best one win.

Category	Gex	Godzilla	Advantage
Spits fire:	Yes	Yes	Push
Allies include:	*Baywatch* babe	Mothra & friends	Gex
Features the voice of:	Dana Gould	Bad Japan FX	Push
Primary weapon is:	Tailwhip	Crushing things underfoot	Godzilla
His stomping grounds are:	The Media Dimension	Primarily Japan	Push
His can also:	Woo women with his long, sticky tongue	Woo Japanese with his brute force and breath	Gex

Ok Pops, one more time:

kiss off the 5-Ball, bounce off the pacemaker, around the dentures, down the walker, **over** the adult diapers, across Martha's cat, back on the table to the 9-Ball

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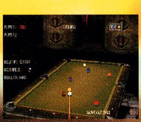

PLAYER 1
PLAYER 2

PlayStation

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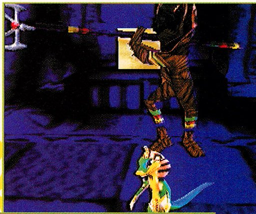
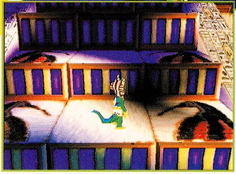
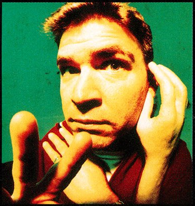
have found time to go out on missions. "There's over 16 full-motion-video sequences where they interact with each other. It isn't just a FMV for FMV's sake where you gotta wait for the loading before it comes up. Gex is actually gonna take his arm and his video watch and pull it to his head, and within that arm resolution there's gonna be video playing on his arm. It was our goal to take the video and not neccessarily have it halt gameplay by keeping these videos short and concise. So the idea is, you're reminded of the story line as you go, but you're not pissed off by lengthy videos. Basically, it's just communicating the relationship between Gex and Marliece and giving the player a short reward at the end of levels. The cinematics are between 10 and 15 seconds each," explains Blundell. Well, that should be more than enough time for any virile male.

But there's more to Gex's personality than a detailed story. The Gex 3 team went through great pains to deliver more character variety than ever before. Blundell explains, "Within the gameplay we have 25 different costumes for Gex and a large percentage of those costumes have gameplay mechanics associated with them." These gameplay mechanics add a whole new dimension to the game by letting Gex do things that he otherwise might not have been able to. For example, Gex can take the form of Dracugex, allowing him to glide around the level with the aid of his cape. When Gex needs to destroy obstacles he can turn into a Herculean Gex, and in the anime level he takes the form of a metallic robot gecko who can float down from high jumps and shoot fire-swarming missiles at his enemies. On other levels he's decked out in costumes such as military garb, a scuba suit and even the Tin Man from *The Wizard of Oz*. Beyond Gex and Agent Xtra there's a part of the story where you'll meet some new and interesting playable characters such as Alfred, Gex's butler. You actually have to rescue two of the secret characters somewhere in the game, and once you do that you'll able to play them in some levels as well. For example, in one level Gex's leopard gecko cousin is captured by the Mob



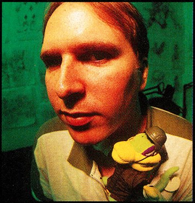


Meet the Developers



Chip Blundell

Chip Blundell is the Product Marketing Manager at Crystal Dynamics. A four-year veteran of the company, Chip worked on the first Gex on the ill-fated 3DO in addition to Gex: Enter the Gecko and Unholy War.



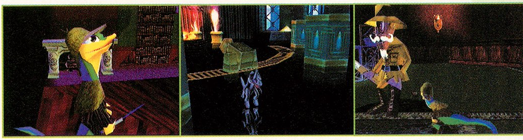
Chris Tremmel

Chris Tremmel is the Lead Designer of Gex 3 and a seven-year veteran of the games industry. He has worked on titles such as The Lost Vikings, Robocop vs. Terminator and the very first Clayfighter.

Most game development teams aren't this big, but Crystal Dynamics doesn't skimp when it comes to nurturing their franchise.

Photos by Jay Blakesberg

From Sherlock Gex to Tin Gex, there's a parody that should tickle anyone's funnybone.



and suspended in a cage. Once you rescue him from his captors you can then select to play as him in the hidden bonus levels. After you find all the hidden levels, it opens up a vault packed with tons of hidden costumes and level selects.

Most of the levels are designed completely around Gex's costumes. Blundell explains: "In one level [the clue level] Gex is Sherlock Holmes and he has a magnifying glass. So when you get to certain parts of the level, you have to look around the level with this magnifying glass. When you're in Look-Around Mode and you focus the magnifying glass on a particular object, you're transported onto that object as mini-Gex. There's a stuffed bear on the clue level and Gex, using Look-Around Mode, looks at the bear and is transported onto the head of the bear. And suddenly you have this huge head that becomes this environment for gameplay. So you have this timed element where Gex has to finish the puzzle in the amount of time but as this mini-Gex on this stuffed bear head."

Each of these levels is also likely to have some sort of vehicle that Gex can ride. There are camels, burros, crocodiles, snowboards, kangaroos, and even a tank that can be used within the levels. Chris Tremmel, lead designer of Gex 3, discusses the uses of the vehicles, "The thing about the riding stuff—we have them appear throughout the levels. But then we have 15 bonus games throughout the game. Each level has its own bonus game and each bonus game involves the riding of a vehicle. And they are timed events: three with the burro, three with the kangaroo, three with the snowboard, three with the crocodile, three with the tank. They involve picking up collectibles, destroying stuff, going through obstacle courses and solving timed puzzles. For the bonus games we'll give you a remote, but then we'll also give you a code you can input in the game once you get toward the end. We have an area in The Hub where you can input different codes. The codes will give you secret costumes, free lives, level select, etc." Blundell adds, "When Chris came aboard, he wanted to get back to the roots of Gex." Those roots, of course, harken back to Gex's 2D gameplay. "Part of the beauty of 2D is that the gameplay setups are right there in front of you and you can only go forward and back. Part of keeping that fun that's 2D in the 3D environments are the minigames that Chris has made. It adds a different pace to the game."

Accomplishing this is an array of 2D shooting segments. In the Wild West and Gangster levels, for example, Gex will find machine guns he can use to mow down enemies. Here, the game shifts to a 2D shooting gallery that ends when Gex steps down to resume the level. What this all serves to do, according to Blundell, is to "make the missions more interesting than 'collect three things, break three things.' "

WE KINDA WENT BACK TO OLD-SCHOOL GEX

We agree, but collecting items like a pack rat is something we've come to expect and enjoy in platformers and there's plenty of it in Gex 3. Things have changed since Gex 2, according to Tremmel. "People weren't really drawn to collectables in the last game. They were there, and if they were in your way, you would pick them up. But they weren't something like Mario or Banjo where you would want every last note or whatever. So what we did is make the collectables something that are the same throughout the entire game. We went back to the version of The Bug collectable from the first Gex. There are a lot more valuables this time. They're a lot prettier. The way the tiers work this time is that we have three collectables

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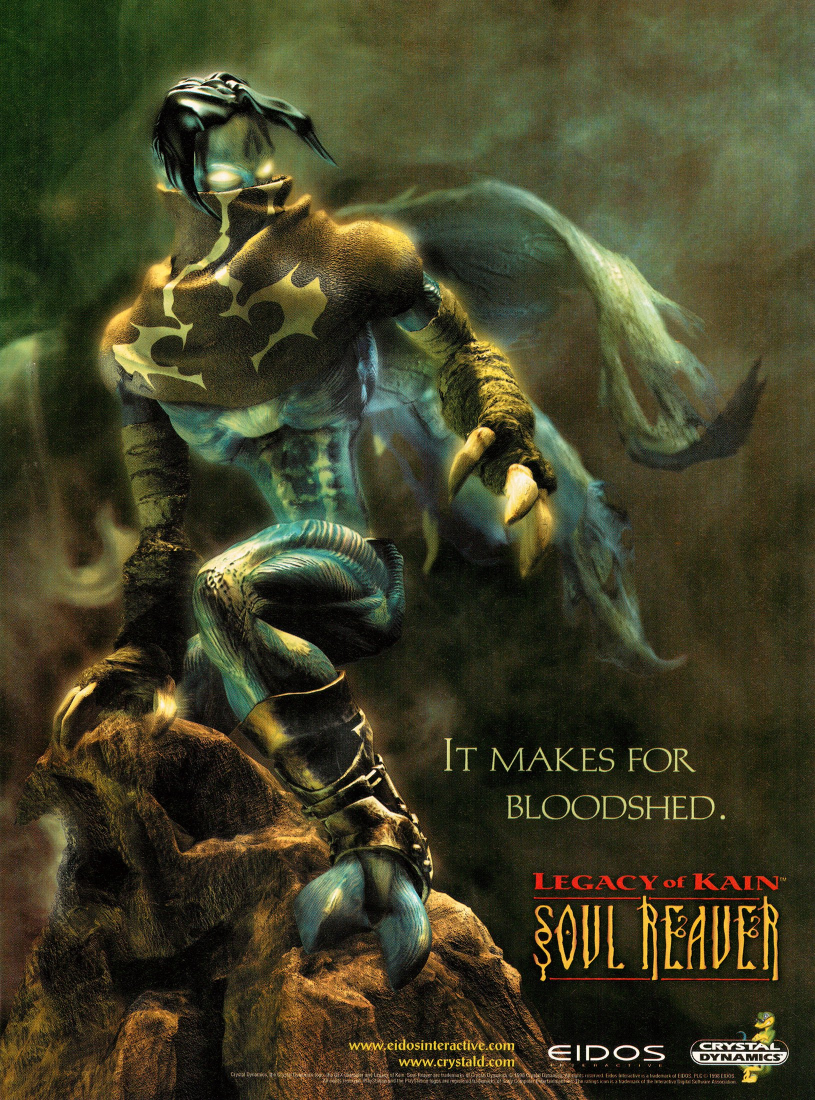
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that are the same throughout the entire game—a bug, a Paw Coin. If you collect enough Paw Coins, it adds a gold outline to it and you'll build up your hit points. The third collectable is a bonus token that you can spend on the bonus games in each level. Televisions (used as teleports in Gex) will have some denomination telling you exactly how much you need."

The improvements to Gex 3 aren't just confined to all-new gameplay additions.

Tremmel explains: "Some of the stuff may not seem so big on the surface. The levels are a lot bigger this time. The programmers came up with a way to allow us to increase level sizes by one-fifth. There's more enemies on screen at one time and a frame-rate increase. Gex 2 ran pretty well; this runs even better. Most of the levels run at about 30 frames per second. We have a lot of new effects. Environment mapping for metal and surfaces. Metallic surfaces that reflect the environment onto the surface in real time. We have the fake environment mapping where we can specify a map to use, but we also have the real environmental mapping. Now I haven't seen other games that can actually reflect the environment onto any surface. We thought it would tax the PlayStation a lot worse than it did. When we talked about doing it and I kinda brought it up as a joke, the next day one of our programmers had it working. So far, we can do it on parts of Gex, like if he has a shield, metal armor or something. A few enemies, too. If we get it on a lot of objects at once, it's a little taxing, but it's a lot better than I thought it was going to be." Blundell chimed in, "With Gex 2 there was a learning curve involved in the whole creation of the engine. What sacrifices you could make..."

He then sarcastically added, "There's always a formula on the PlayStation, right? You can only do so much." Blundell continues, "Going to Gex 3, our programmers and designers got together and asked, 'What can we do to make this graphically step up and drive the PlayStation a little bit harder?' So the engine has evolved, and we've had other 3D projects internally [Legacy of Kain II, Akuji] that the programmers have been able to work together on doing different tricks to make this a next-generation PlayStation title. That's been our objective all along: How do we really make Gex 2 raise the bar for Gex 3 so that it's better not only graphically but from a gameplay perspective also."

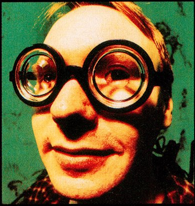
To Blundell, improving that gameplay perspective included increasing the number and variety of enemies. "We're gonna have more than double the amount of enemies we had in Gex 2. There's 60-plus enemies

MEET MORE DEVELOPERS

It's not surprising that Gex: Deep Cover Gecko is a character-driven game when you see the people who designed and put it together. Deep within the cubed catacombs of Crystal Dynamics, we managed to pry the Gex 3 team away from their computers for just long enough to put them in front of the OPM cameras.

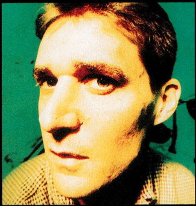
ADRIAN LONGLAND

As lead programmer, Adrian tinkers a lot with the game engine and is responsible for stuff like the 2D gun sequences.



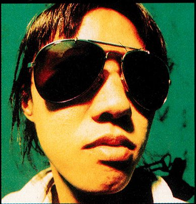
GLEN SCHOFIELD

Director of Gex 3 and Crystal Dynamics veteran. Among other things, he makes sure heads roll when deadlines aren't met.



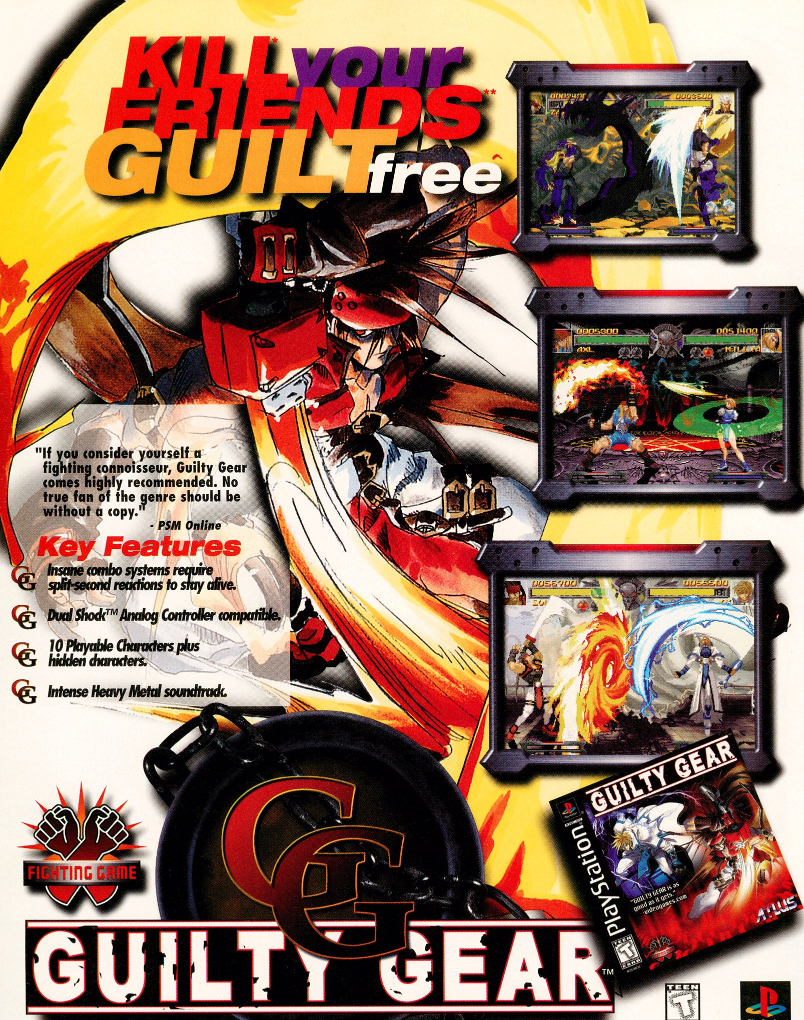
JEFFREY ZWELLING

When he's not biting down on an oversized cigar, Jeffery resumes his duties as producer of Gex 3.



MEILIN WONG

As the other lead programmer of Gex 3, Meilin is primarily responsible for working on the game's cameras.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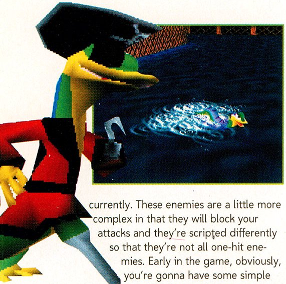


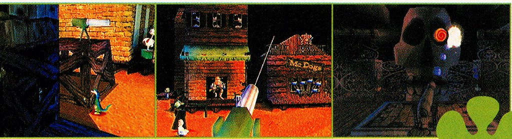
currently. These enemies are a little more complex in that they will block your attacks and they're scripted differently so that they're not all one-hit enemies. Early in the game, obviously, you're gonna have some simple enemies, but as the game progresses, the enemies become more difficult and more intelligent." With more complex enemies comes more complex firepower—some of this should be familiar to Gex fans. According to Blundell, "One of the things we heard from some of the magazines concerning Gex 1 to Gex 2 is, 'We miss hucking fireballs.' We re-evaluated some of that stuff. The ice power-up really was not that existent in Gex 2 to the degree to which everyone wanted it. So we kinda went back to old-school Gex to implement the fireball and ice huck." The ice huck might prove to be a very useful attack, explains Tremmel. "If you hit this guy with the ice, it turns him into a cube. Then you're able to push the cube around and use it as a platform to get to an area. If you don't break it by tail-whacking it, then the enemies thaws out." We wouldn't want that, now, would we?

Most of all, we don't want camera problems. One of the main complaints with every 3D game, particularly platformers, is that flawed camera views hinder gameplay. Gex 2 had its share of camera bugs and complaints, and it's something that's definitely on the development team's minds. "The idea was to minimize the frustration to the consumer and make the camera simpler. We'll have one camera option instead of three [in Gex 2], and within that one camera you'll have different distances from the character that you can set the camera. But beyond that there were instances in Gex 2 that the camera moved to direct the consumer, and in some cases the gamer felt the camera was getting in the way of gameplay—you'd miss a jump and such. We're eliminating some of those scripting cameras for left-to-right movements so you're not knocking Gex off platforms and off ledges when you're trying to make a jump," says Blundell. Tremmel adds, "How the camera reacts when it's backed into a wall is different. When Gex falls off a ledge, the camera will stay on the ledge for a few frames, then calculate position, then move to it. We're gonna keep the camera more inside the world this time."

If all these elements come together in good fashion, Gex 3 could be a great playing game in addition to the most in-depth platformer on the PlayStation. Blundell summarizes it well: "The big thing going into Gex 3 that was really important for us was to make sure everything is all new. That's part of our message. We really want to make the world rich and create a different experience for people. You think about all of the new characters, costumes and all the mechanics—it's overwhelming. We've essentially restarted from scratch. There's so much going on in the game.

STOUIOSZ-PRISON-CAMP
TOO-EARLY-IN-THE-MORNING

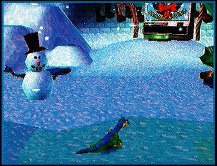
We're pretty proud of the fact we're putting that much detail into the character. The only game that is doing anything like this is Crash Bandicoot: Warped!" If Gex could stand tall in that kind of company, *OPM* would certainly be pleased—and we think Agent Xtra would be, too.



Various 2D shooting gallery minigames are dispersed throughout the 15 levels of Gex: Deep Cover Gecko.

THE HUB

If you've played any of the Gex titles, you know all about The Hub that is used to hop from level to level. In Gex 3, The Hub has been entirely scrapped and remade into something really different. Blundell explains: "One thing that struck me when I first saw The Hub is that it felt like a level; it didn't feel like a hub where you were blocked off. It felt like I could search around here and find stuff. In addition to that everything wasn't limited to 'here's a door, open the door and go into the level.' There are little secrets within The Hub. For instance, one of the worlds is blocked by boulders and you have to find a way to bust the boulders to get through to the next section. The map area is an interactive device that really makes you feel like as a gamer you have an impact on how you're opening the levels, as opposed to getting a key to open a door. We love the beauty of not having a linear setup where you have to go to different levels to progress. But at the same time we like the fact that we're creating interactivity within The Hub in order for the gamer to open up certain levels." It seems like a good direction to go in. By making The Hub look like any other part of the game, it makes Gex 3 a more immersive experience altogether. Solving 3D levels and then being shot back into a 2D map or something that looks nothing like the rest of the game would definitely hurt the consistency and feel of the game as a whole, and it's something that Gex 3 has definitely avoided.



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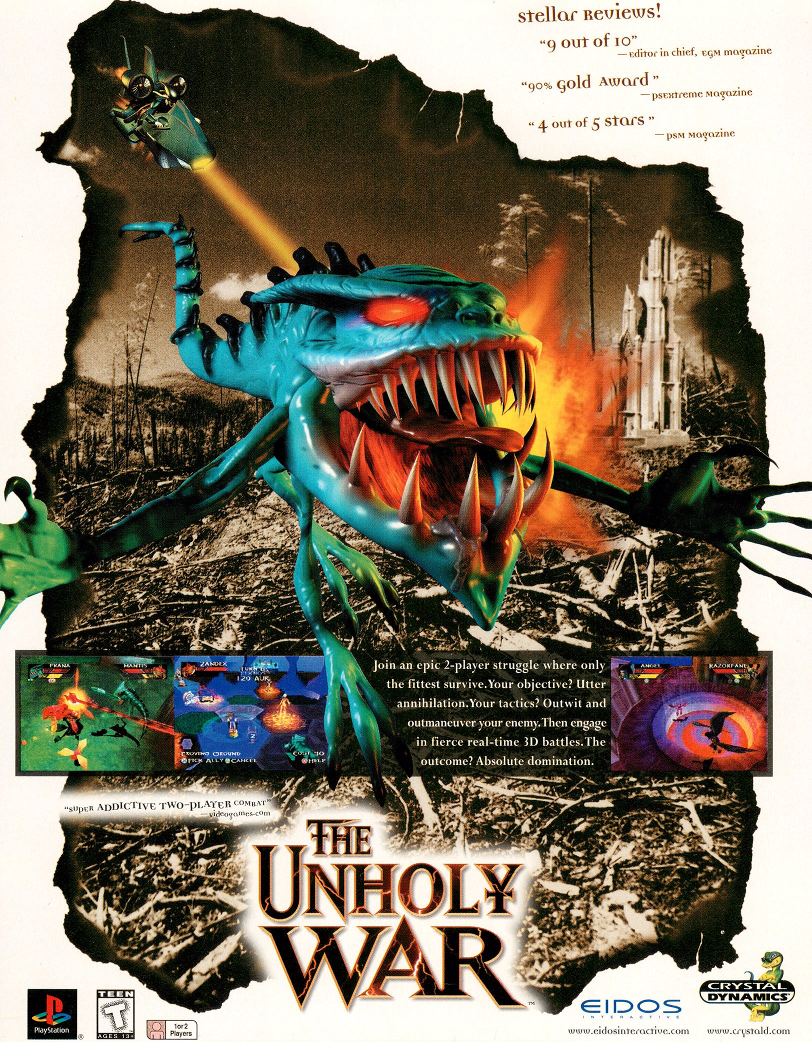

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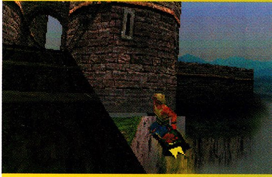

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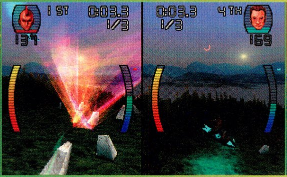
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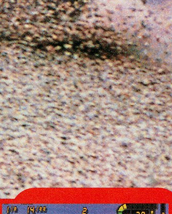

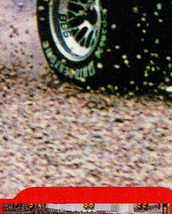

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Reviews

The final word—official and unbiased

Meet the Critics

Kraig Kujawa
Editor in Chief

Since his Green Bay Packers have been torturing him with their ridiculously inconsistent play, Kraig has reimmersed himself in football games; particularly Madden 99 and Blitz 99 (arcade). He'll stop just in time to play the next Ridge Racer game.

Favorite Genres: Sports, Strategy, Action
Current Favorites: Madden NFL 99, Crash: WARPED
Can't Wait For: Silent Hill, R4

Joe Rybicki
Deputy Editor

After much soul-searching, Joe has decided that his life's dream is to someday be the subject of a song by Wesley Willis. Meanwhile, he continues to stock up on iced tea mix in anticipation of the Y2K crisis.

Favorite Genres: Adventure, RPG, Puzzle
Current Favorites: *OPM* Demo Disc 16
Can't Wait For: Silent Hill, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, a new They Might Be Giants studio album

Wataru Maruyama
West Coast Editor

Wat has been waiting for good 2D fighters to surface on the PlayStation. Check out his thoughts on DarkStalkers III to see how excited he is. Of course, great 3D fighters like Tekken 3 have made the wait more bearable.

Favorite Genres: Fighting, Racing, Adventure
Current Favorites: MGS, DarkStalkers 3, Tekken 3
Can't Wait For: SF Alpha 3, Silent Hill, Ridge Racer Type 4 w/Jogcon

Mark MacDonald
Assistant Editor

Mark spent most of this month trying to catch up on all the great games just released. Will he ever finish them all? "The end matters not," he says, "for it is the journey that I live for!" We just smile and slowly back away...

Favorite Genres: RPG, Action, Adventure, Shooters
Current Favorites: Beatmania, Capcom Gen. 2
Can't Wait For: Silent Hill, Final Fantasy VIII, R-Type Delta, R4, Lunar: SSSC, Ehrgeiz, Quake II

What about QUALITY?

by Joe Rybicki

OK, yes, Metal Gear Solid is short. We know. Newsgroup soapbox-standers, attention-seekers and jaded gamers, take note: We get it already. You like your games to take longer to beat than the seven to 15 hours usually assigned to MGS. (Never mind the fact that players of Resident Evil 2 generally attested to roughly half that, and gave the game nowhere near as much heat. That's an issue for another rant.) We understand what you're saying.

And there is certainly something to be said for the scope of games of old. I still have legal pads full of scribbled notes for Ultima V on the PC; I appreciate length and breadth as much as the next game geek. But there's an issue here that seems to be overlooked far too often lately: depth.

To put it another way, too many game reviewers today focus on the quantitative fact that today's games are smaller in length or scope, and seem to miss the fact that they are qualitatively greater—that is, they offer a deeper, richer and more involving experience than ever before. To return to the specific example of Metal Gear Solid: Sure, the game can be finished in somewhere around 10 hours. But in that time the player hasn't come close to exhausting all the game has to offer. I've been seeing reviews and newsgroup postings griping about how the game is overrated because it can be beat in *x* hours. None of these seems to mention the different endings, the VR Training Mode, the loads of secrets or the other subtle nuances that make MGS one of the truly great games of our time. Some of these subtleties may not be seen until just the right circumstances fall into place or the player decides to start experimenting more. How can that be measured?

Now, I'm not claiming that the depth acquits the short story time entirely. But it does seriously overshadow it. After all, you may reach the end quickly, but you'll have one hell of a time getting there. And isn't that every bit as important?

Lara doesn't have to worry about length. Of her adventure, that is. Tomb Raider 3 is huge.

Games Reviewed

Tomb Raider III 90-91
Twisted Metal III 94-95
Knockout Kings 98
Bust a Groove 100
Apocalypse 102
NBA Live 99 106
DarkStalkers 3 108
Street Fighter Collection....108
Destrega 112
Tiny Tank 112
Tiger Woods 99 113
Asteroids...........................113

Box Score

It doesn't get much more simple, yet effective than *OPM*'s five-disc rating system. Very few games are lucky enough to get our golden five-disc salute, but if one does, be sure to pick it up!

●○○○○ We would play with road kill before playing this piece of garbage. Really, we would.

●●○○○ Below average. There's some fundamental flaws with this game; get something better.

●●●○○ A good title. It's a fun game with some flaws that can be overlooked.

●●●●○ Definitely a topnotch game. Very good and well worth your time.

●●●●● Fabulous! These are the games that really make you proud to own a PlayStation.

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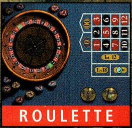
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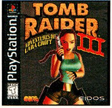


1 Player

Memory Card 2 blocks

Analog Controller Compatible

Developer	Core Design
Publisher	Eidos
Genre	Adventure

Tomb Raider III

Frustrating, but worth the effort

Please forgive me if this is less coherent than usual. I was up all night visiting with an old friend named Lara. She's a nice girl; you'd like her. Sure, she can be hard to handle sometimes and she's never really grown out of some problems she had at an early age, which leaves her a bit unstable—unbalanced, even. But she's tough as nails, takes crap from no one, and has an admirable spirit of adventure. And in spite of all her problems, you can't help but want to guide her through *just one more level...*

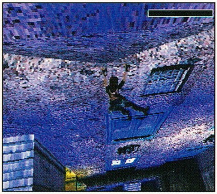
Everything old is new again...and again

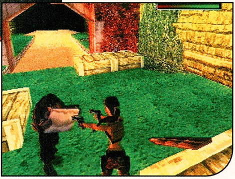
Let me tell you, though, Lara hasn't changed much in the past few years. When she first hit the scene, people called her revolutionary—but two years is a long time in the world of video games, and the revolutionary games from that period appear surprisingly dated today. Considering that the basic Tomb Raider engine hasn't changed significantly since the original game, TRIII looks and feels a bit worn. The upgrade to hi-res makes things look crisper, but crisp pixels still look like pixels; and the game still retains its grainy feel. Some nice colored light-sourcing helps update the game a bit, but overall the look is strikingly similar to the previous games.

It's what's underneath that counts

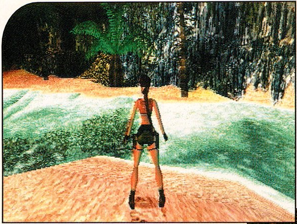
Now, that's not to say the game itself hasn't undergone some improvements. The level designers got a heck of a lot more creative this time around, which gives the game a great deal more variety than before. Levels in the Nevada desert, the South Pacific and the subways of London add some much-needed variety—especially considering that this time around, they actually look and feel like the locations they represent. The level design feels a lot more authentic (once you get out of the standard jungle environment, at least; more on that later). When Lara plunges to the bottom of an immense holding tank in a London power plant, you can practically feel the pressure of the water.

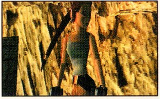
More organic environment design and careful use of sound effects help with the more realistic feel. Fire Lara's pistols in a large room and

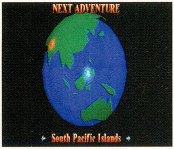




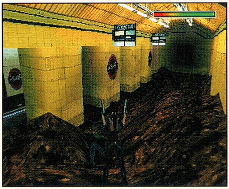
Like the previous game, TRIII has a huge obstacle course outside of Lara's home. This one's particularly challenging, but includes a set of pistols (above) so you can finally open up on that damned annoying butler that follows Lara around!

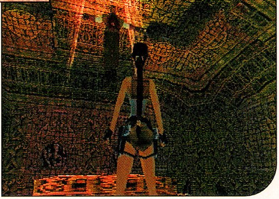






Another nice addition to TRIII is the ability to choose your own path rather than having it determined for you (above). After completing the India levels, you have the option of traveling to one of three different destinations.





you'll hear appropriately impressive echoes, for example, and you can hear the faint sound of insects on the desert levels. And the environments are dramatically lit and much more colorful than those in the previous games, adding some very welcome graphical variety.

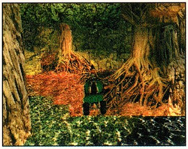
That's a lot of running!

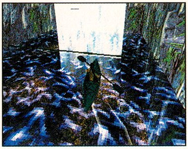
In addition to all this, the game is every bit as huge as previous Tomb Raider titles. Some levels are simply immense, which translates into some seriously extensive play time (and a great deal of running around), which is always welcome.

Unfortunately, a lot of this play time can be attributed to replaying level sections. Why, you ask? Well, apparently someone over at Core decided that being able to save as often as you like made Tomb Raider II too easy, so TRIII marks the return of the limited save—sort of. It's a slightly more forgiving system than the first games; instead of having to find Save Points, you need to collect Save Crystals, which you can use to save your position wherever you want. But they might as well have returned to the Save Points, because without knowing where the Crystals are located, you're not going to want to use up your supply. It's a poorly thought-out return to one of the most irritating aspects of the original game, and makes TRIII much more frustrating than it should be, especially in the more difficult levels—which leads me to another major complaint, the unbalanced gameplay. The first two levels in the game (the second, in particular) can get mind-numbingly, excruciatingly difficult. The fact that these are tired, uninteresting jungle areas makes plowing through them a chore. But it's a chore that's worth the effort, because afterward the game smoothes out quite a bit, with a much more managable level of difficulty (my play time for the second level was over an hour, for example, while the third level took barely 15 minutes).

Combined with level design that makes it a blast to just wander around, these later levels return to what Tomb Raider is about: exploring and adventure. As long as you can stick it out through the first few levels (and as long as the significant graphics glitches and camera problems don't drive you away), you'll find Lara a rewarding and addictive—if sometimes frustrating—companion. *—Joe Rybicki*

Viva vehicles





Like the previous game, Tomb Raider III includes vehicles for Lara to control, including a four-wheel All-Terrain Vehicle (above left) and a rapids-worthy kayak (above right). Unfortunately, the game doesn't have any areas to really experiment with these vehicles. Once you nabbed the snowmobile in TRII, you gained access to a large room with lots of ramps and jumps and other fun stuff. I was expecting the same in TRIII with at least the ATV, but no dice. There are some pretty impressive jumps you'll need to navigate; there's just nowhere to play around with Lara's new toy. Oh, well, perhaps in Tomb IV...

Box Score

Pros

- **Much more interesting level design makes it fun to just explore**
- **More realistic environments**
- **It's huge!**

Cons

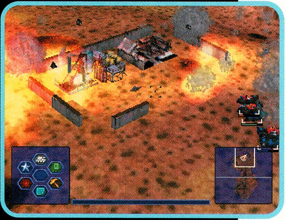
- **A limited save system**
- **Severely unbalanced levels**
- **LOTS of graphical glitches**
- **LOTS of camera problems**
- **Not improved enough**

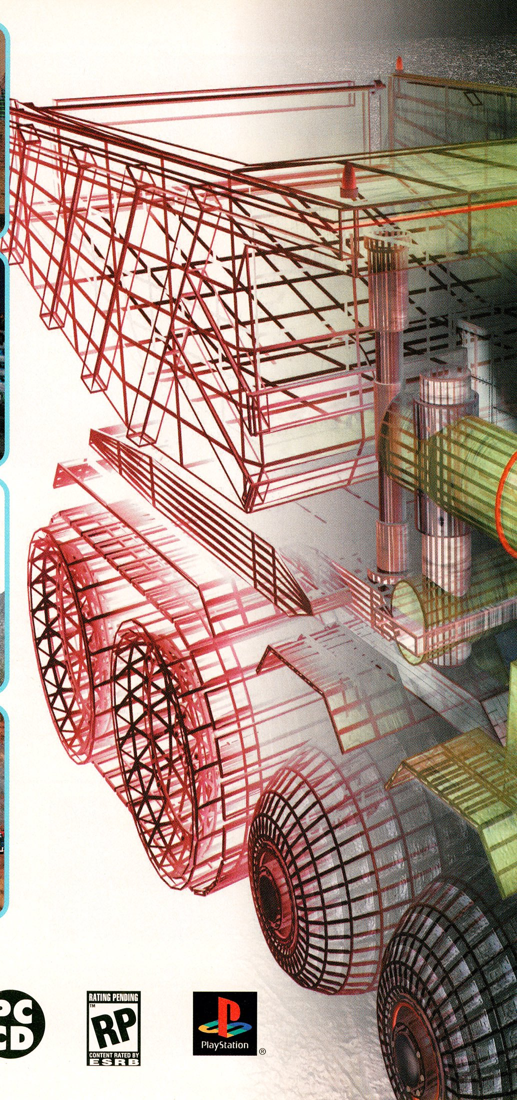
"As long as you can stick it out through the first few levels, you'll find Lara a rewarding and addictive—if sometimes frustrating—companion."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

● ● ● ◐ ○

Rating





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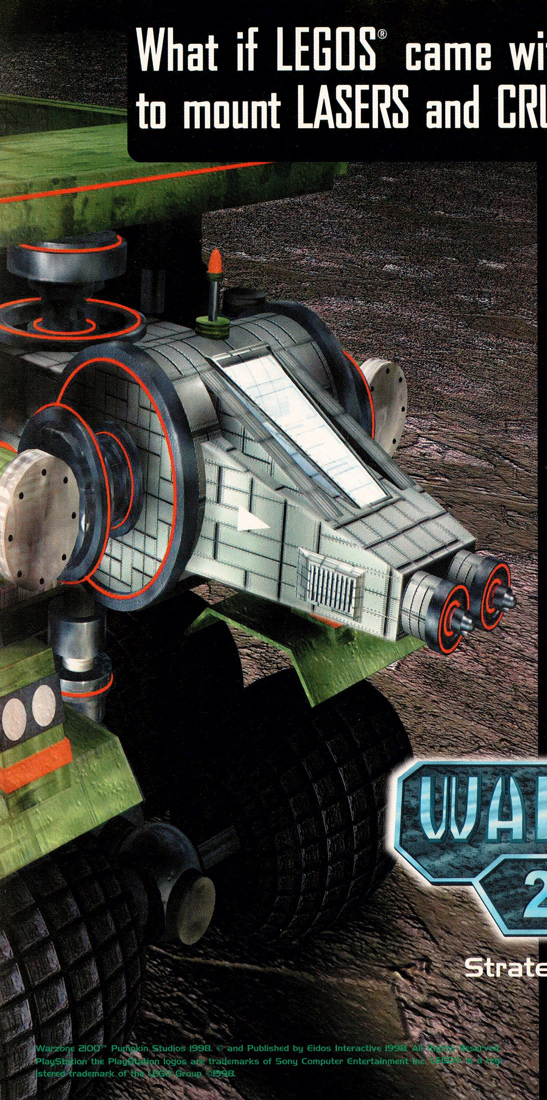

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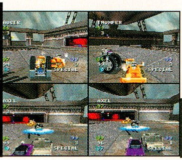
Developer	989 Studios
Publisher	989 Studios
Genre	Action

1~4 Players

Memory Card 1 block

Analog Controller Compatible

Twisted Metal III



You can't franchise imagination

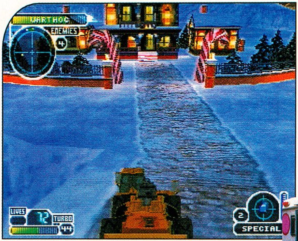
It was the night of Sept. 24, 1982. I had eagerly settled in to watch another fine episode of the *Dukes of Hazzard*. With the past season having done so well, I figured this season's premiere would boast some prime Dukeage. But as the show began, I was aghast. Something was wrong, horribly wrong. Gone were the familiar Bo and Luke Duke; in their place were two soap opera-reject impostors with the unlikely names of Coy and Vance. Sure, on the surface they looked similar. One was blond and suave with the ladies, the other dark-haired and a bit rougher around the edges. Daisy was still there, and Boss Hogg, and, of course, the good ol' General Lee. But the show, similar though it may have been in appearance, had lost the personality had made it such a success to my discriminating 8-year-old mind.

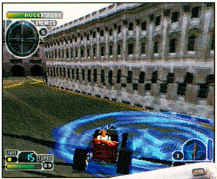
And my point is...?

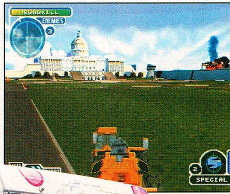
It's always sad to see a familiar franchise change hands. There's always a chance that the new proprietors might do a better job, but it's a slim chance. In the case of Twisted Metal III, in changing hands from SingleTrac to 989 Studios the franchise has all but lost what made it appealing in the first place.

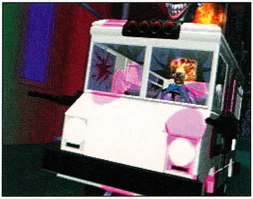
Gone are the large, interesting levels. In their place are levels that are either small and bland or large and bland. Granted, there are a few exceptions, but nothing to match, say, the New York level of TM2. On the whole, TMIII's arenas lack imagination. Most of the "secrets" are painfully obvious to anyone but the computer-controlled AI opponents. There are occasional bright spots, especially in the multiplayer Deathmatch Mode (a favorite tactic of mine is pumping Ricochet Bombs into the North Pole ravine), but for the most part these tend to feel accidental rather than intentional.

Also gone are the cool, sinister characters of the previous games. In their place are hokey impostors and even hokier newcomers. Call up info on any given character and you'll hear a cheesy rant delivered by a cheesy voice actor—accompanied by artwork that bears about as much resemblance to the fantastic comic style of the earlier games as *Beetle*

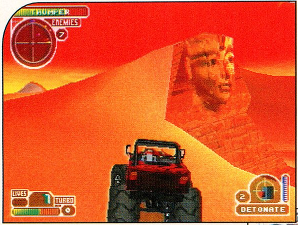


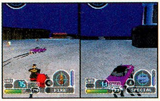


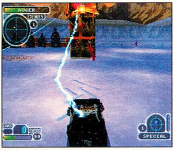


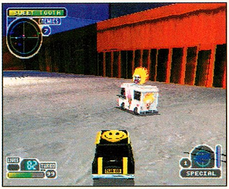


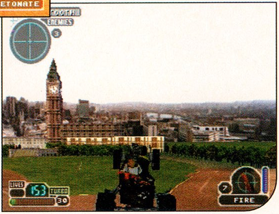
The cinemas (above) are interesting in that they combine rendered vehicles with flat, comic book-style backgrounds. But the animation is extremely poor, especially the horrible facial contortions Calypso performs during the introduction.











Some levels do have their secrets. You can blow up Big Ben (left), for example, or call lightning down on your opponents at the North Pole. But most of these are either painfully obvious or "hinted" at during the level intros with no subtlety whatsoever. See below for more examples.

Bailey does to van Gogh's *Starry Night*. (And don't even get me started on the terrible cinemas. The idea of combining rendered art with flat animation is an interesting one, but in this case the results are, shall we say, less than spectacular.)

Bright spots on dull chrome

Of course, this *is* a Twisted Metal game. If you just want to catch up with your old TM friends and don't really give a hoot about atmosphere or how true this new offering is to the rest of the series, you'll no doubt be pleased to know that many of the old favorites have returned, including Axel, Mr. Grimm and, of course, Sweet Tooth. Furthermore, many special moves and weapons have been carried over from the previous game, helping make the transition easier for fans of the series.

Other highlights include the formidable level of challenge, the length of some of the more advanced matches and the four-person multitap Split-screen Mode, which allows you to face off against three brave friends.

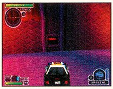
But...

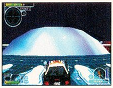
It must be pointed out that the challenge level is in many cases more a result of sloppy design than anything else. The game's physics (inherited from Rally Cross, we're told) can be absolutely brutal. Crash into a wall at the wrong angle, for example, and you could find yourself out of commission in a dangerous roll that could easily cost you a life. Also particularly touchy are ramps, stairs, pools of water, empty stretches of concrete and pretty much every other surface in the game. This can make for some hearty laughs in a friendly deathmatch, but translates into frustration if you're trying to beat the game.

Also disappointing is the low frame-rate in just about any multi player game involving more than two vehicles. Why can't developers at least offer the option of a lower-resolution or a minimal-texture mode to help speed up processor-intensive situations like this?

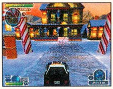
In the end, I would have to recommend either Vigilante 8 or Rogue Trip before TMIII to all but the most die-hard TM fans. V8 looks and controls better, and Rogue Trip is simply more fun to play. The godfather of vehicular combat deserves better. *—Joe Rybicki*

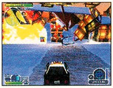
Some not-so-secrets



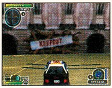


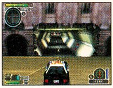
Hangar 18—Blow up these suspicious switches (far left) and you'll gain access to the upper level. Turn left and head to the far platform, where you'll turn left again and enter a teleporter. Blow up the spaceship's dome (left) to reveal a powerful weapon.





North Pole—Gosh, I wonder what all these buildings are doing in the middle of a clearing? Blow up Santa's village and you'll be able to pick up the Lightning weapon, which will torch anyone unlucky enough to get near the central pillar.





London—Here's a hint: Writing "Keep Out" on a wall is a pretty good way to ensure that absolutely no one will. Here you'll find a few choice weapons and a valuable shortcut you can use to keep the heck out of Minion's way.

Box Score

Pros

- Familiar characters
- Some nifty special attacks
- Four-player Twisted Metal!
- Cooperative multiplayer mode

Cons

- Bland, unimaginative level design
- Touchy physics
- Dramatic frame-rate drop in big multiplayer games
- Bad art and cinemas

"In changing hands the franchise has all but lost what made it appealing in the first place."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

● ● ◐ ○ ○

Rating

PlayStation
EVERYONE
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
IDOL MINDS

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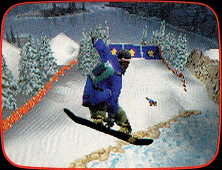
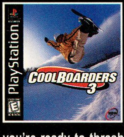


1:09:30
POINTS
0
163
TRICKS
46
AILSLIDE
POWER

swatch
0:38:40
POINTS
0
POS.
2
MPH.
46


PlayStation
COOLBOARDERS 3
E

Packed solid with insane tricks and treacherous downhill runs, CoolBoarders® 3 is so realistic it'll turn your living room into a half-pipe. Lock into an authentic Burton® or Ride® snowboard and you're ready to thrash through 34 courses, 5 challenging mountains and 6 world class events. Feel the wind rushing by as you pull off thousands of combinations with sick moves like Misty Flips, Melancholy's and Sad Air. Throw in intense fighting action and 2 player split-screen racing and your teeth will be chattering long after you've left the slopes.

989™ STUDIOS

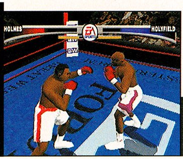
COOLBOARDERS® 3

PlayStation
Knockout Kings
EA Sports

1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1~6 blocks
Analog Controller Compatible

Developer Electronic Arts
Publisher Electronic Arts
Genre Sports

Knockout Kings



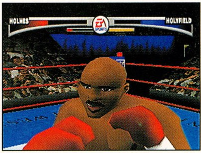
EA's boxing game packs a realistic punch

After years of waiting, boxing fans finally have a PlayStation game they can sink their fists into. Knockout Kings is a gritty boxing simulation that takes the sport very seriously—probably even more than it deserves. Who really wants to box in this laughable era of ear-biting, 50-year-old men fighting, and Don King evangelizing? Well all right, maybe some of us do.

Thankfully, EA doesn't force players to lower themselves to the boxing "style" of the present. The game has more than 30 real boxers from the past and present ranging from Muhammad Ali to Evander Holyfield, allowing you to re-create a variety of historic match-ups. Most of the boxers look nearly identical to their real-life counterparts. Their faces are texture-mapped onto their polygonal heads, and if you connect on enough punches, they'll even give you the satisfaction of bleeding a little bit too. If you don't care to live through someone else's persona, you're free to create your own boxer from scratch and raise him through the rankings to get a shot at the championship.

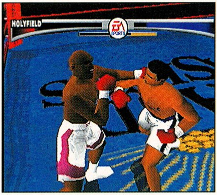
Doing so can be a laborious task. Boxing is often a brutal chess match, and Knockout Kings re-creates that almost flawlessly. Knowing how and when to punch, block and counter is essential to consistent success in the game. Even after mastering many of the moves, I still had trouble knocking out my opponent, and often won through a decision or squeaked by with TKOs. Although realistic, this style of play, coupled with the game's deliberate pace, saps some of the excitement out of the matches. EA tried to help cater to arcade tastes by including a Slugfest Mode that lets you play without rules. Unfortunately, it isn't different or fast enough to reel in casual players.

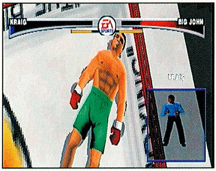
The bottom line is that if you're looking for a hardcore boxing simulation, you'll love Knockout Kings. Anyone else looking for a fast-paced brawl should buy a fighting game or wait to see how Sony's forthcoming boxing game Contender (previewed in this issue) turns out. *—Kraig Kujawa*

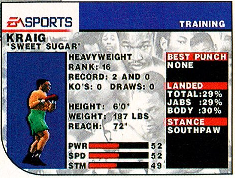


Switch to the first-person camera and feel what it's like to be in the ring with Holyfield (above).

BUTTERBEAN
HOLYFIELD
1:23
ROUND 1







EA SPORTS TRAINING
KRAIG "SWEET SUGAR"
HEAVYWEIGHT
RANK: 16
RECORD: 2 AND 0
KO'S: 0 DRAWS: 0
HEIGHT: 6'0"
WEIGHT: 187 LBS
REACH: 72"
PWR 52
SPD 52
STM 49
BEST PUNCH
NONE
LANDED
TOTAL:29%
JABS :29%
BODY :30%
STANCE
SOUTHPAW

Crate your own boxer and train him as he climbs the ranking charts. Here, your friendly editor takes a nap on the ring canvas (left).

Box Score

Pros

- Lots of boxers
- Realistic boxing
- Plenty of moves

Cons

- Gameplay is a little too slow
- Only true boxing fans will really like the game
- Loads too often

"The bottom line is that if you're looking for a hardcore boxing simulation, you'll love Knockout Kings."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine
● ● ● ◐ ○
Rating

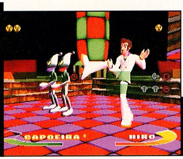
THE FUTURE
HAS ONE TINY
HOPE FOR
SURVIVAL

Developer	Enix
Publisher	989 Studios
Genre	Misc.

1or 2 Players

Memory Card 1 block

Bust A Groove



PlayStation

Don't just stand there, bust a groove

About the only game you might have played that comes close to the style of Bust A Groove is the enigmatic PaRappa the Rapper. The basic idea is the same: tap buttons to the beat of various songs, only this time instead of out-rapping the computer the idea is to out-dance your opponent.

Because so much of the game hinges on music, the soundtrack plays a much more important role in Bust A Groove than usual; luckily its 12 original CD tracks are up to the task. There's a good variety of musical styles represented in the songs, all of them catchy and memorable, matching the stage and character they go along with perfectly. 989 also did an amazing job converting the few tracks that were originally recorded in Japanese; the transition is so smooth, in fact, it'll be impossible for anyone who hasn't played the import to tell which songs have been changed at all.

Of course, to dance you need more than just the right music; you also gotta have the moves—and Bust A Groove has that covered as well. All the motion-captured steps come off smoothly and gracefully, working perfectly in time with the different songs. The stages and dancers look great and the constantly moving camera keeps the matches dynamic and exciting.

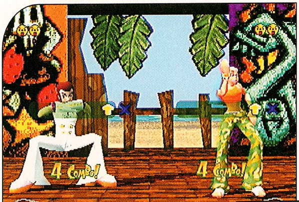
The only gripe I have with Bust A Groove is that it's difficult to play and watch at the same time. Since you need to concentrate on listening to the music and performing the increasingly difficult dance steps (for example, left, left, right, up and X) to the rhythm, actually being able to watch your character dance can be quite a chore.

But the great soundtrack, unorthodox theme and fresh look of the game are still hard to resist, even for casual and nongamers. The bottom line is, if you liked PaRappa, you should like Bust A Groove. As a one-player game the novelty will wear off, but as a multiplayer and party game few titles can match it. Highly recommended.

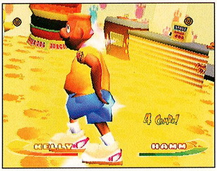
—Mark MacDonald

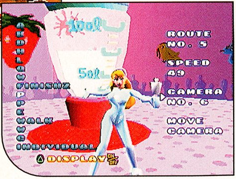
3 Combo!
HEAT
HEAT

For the less scrupulous dancers out there, you can attack your opponents a couple times per match and try to knock them out of their groove.



3 Combo!
KELLY
ROBO-Z





Each character you finish Bust A Groove with becomes available in the game's Dance View Mode, pictured above. There you can choreograph your own custom dance sequence, choosing from all the available steps and camera positions.

Box Score

Pros

- Awesome soundtrack
- Smooth dancing and slick look
- Some great characters to choose from

Cons

- Not much depth to the gameplay
- Hard to play and watch at the same time

"The great soundtrack, unorthodox theme and fresh look is hard to resist, even for casual and nongamers."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

●●●●○

Rating

WHO THE !*#% YOU CALLIN' TINY?

"Tiny Tank's effects are some of the most impressive seen on a PlayStation... the game itself is a technical wonder."
-Next Generation

TINY TANK
UP YOUR ARSENAL

THE ADORABLE KILLING MACHINE

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MGM INTERACTIVE

Created by AndNow

PlayStation®

Developed by Appaloosa Interactive

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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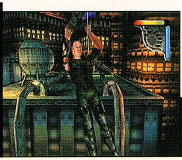
Developer Neversoft
Publisher Activision
Genre Action

PlayStation
APOCALYPSE
ACTIVISION

1 Player
Analog Controller Compatible
Memory Card 1 block



Apocalypse

Simple fun, but not the end of the world

For all the time it spent in development (over two years), the many different forms it has appeared in over that time, and the hyped celebrity contributions, Apocalypse ended up a surprisingly simple game: basically, you run around and blow stuff up. Blow *lots* of stuff up.

Both in controls and gameplay, Apocalypse feels similar to old arcade shoot-everything-that-moves games like Robotron and Smash TV, but with added platformer elements. Controls are quick and easy—one analog stick (or the D-pad) for movement and the other (or four buttons) to fire in any direction, with shoulder buttons for jumping and changing weapons. The camera shifts and zooms automatically as you pass through the levels, jumping over obstacles and across cliffs, building rooftops, moving platforms with lava below, etc. This changing perspective looks great visually but can be quite confusing controlwise, especially when it shifts in midjump with gaping death below.

Graphics are about average for a modern PlayStation title, impressive at times but overall way too dark. Yes, it *is* called Apocalypse, so it's obviously not going to be sunshine and pink bunnies, but the heavy shading is so overused here that the graphics come off looking dull and washed-out; sometimes it's so dark it's hard to even tell where you are. There are some nice visual effects (enemies running around on fire after you torch them with the flamethrower comes to mind), but the explosions and most of the weapons are disappointingly plain-looking and unoriginal. Slowdown also pops up now and then when things heat up, which perhaps is the reason behind the subdued effects elsewhere in the game.

And yet, despite all its problems, Apocalypse is still fun in the way that only mindless shooters can be. Think of it like any recent Bruce Willis movie: nothing very serious or involving, but plenty of action and decent fun if you can shut off your brain.

—Mark MacDonald

Both Bruce WIllis and pop singer Poe were recorded and motion captured for the rendered cut scenes between each level, but even so the story never really takes off.

CHECKPOINT

The flamethrower and FMV video screens within the levels spice up the graphics to a point, but can't rescue Apocalypse from going overboard on the dark and dreary look.

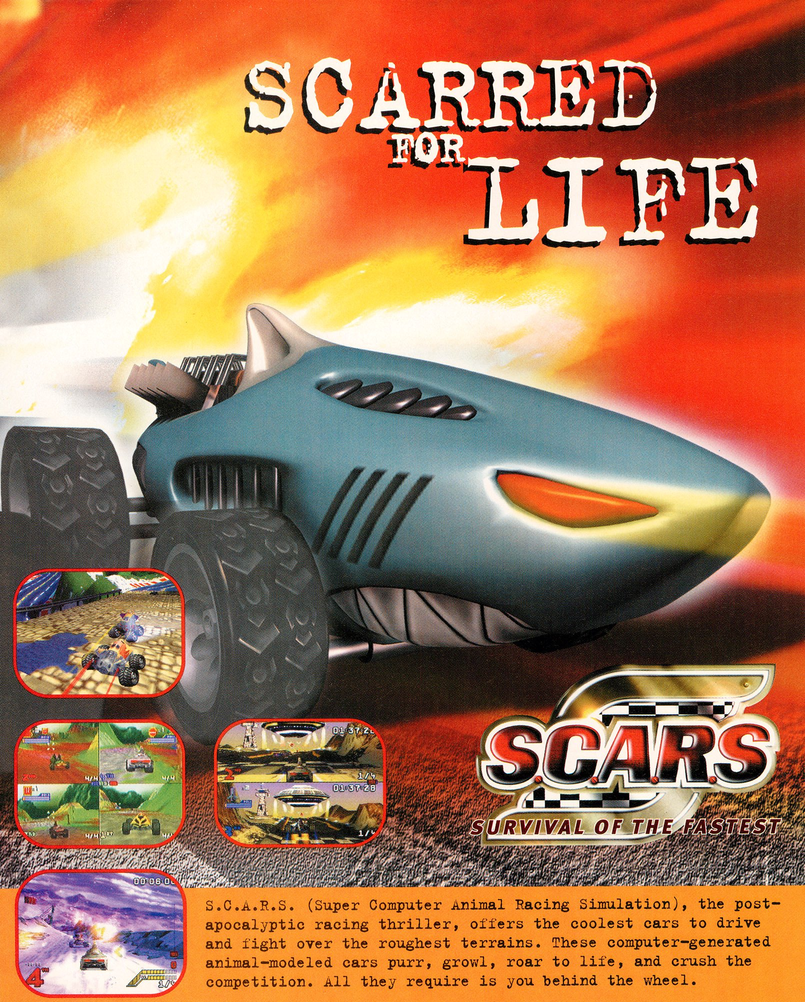
Box Score

Pros
- Nothing but nonstop action
- Intuitive control scheme well suited to the gameplay
- Huge levels

Cons
- Occasional slowdown
- Graphics too dark and drab
- Automatic moving camera sometimes makes things difficult

"Nothing very serious or involving, but plenty of action and decent fun if you can shut off your brain."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine
● ● ● ○ ○
Rating



S.C.A.R.S. (Super Computer Animal Racing Simulation), the post-apocalyptic racing thriller, offers the coolest cars to drive and fight over the roughest terrains. These computer-generated animal-modeled cars purr, growl, roar to life, and crush the competition. All they require is you behind the wheel.

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CD-ROM WINDOWS 95
PlayStation
NINTENDO 64
EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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Dodge®

Honda

Mazda

Mitsubishi

Nissan

Subaru

Toyota

TVR

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OVERTAKING

To rule the turns, (A) take a late apex and use your exit speed to pass on the inside. To protect a lead, (B) try a defensive line that keeps your opponent in the rearview mirror.

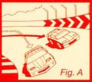


Fig. A

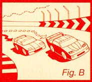
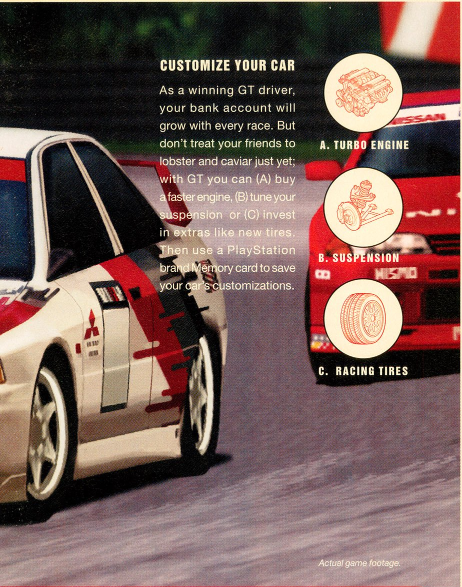


Fig. B



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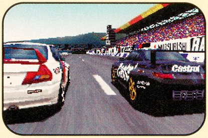
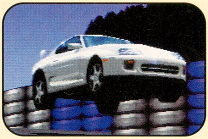
PlayStation®

www.playstation.com





GRAN TURISMO™

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EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

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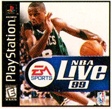
Developer	Electronic Arts
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Genre	Sports

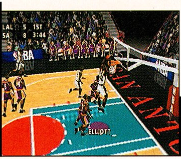


1 or 2 Players

Memory Card 1~6 blocks

Analog Controller Compatible

NBA Live 99



The only hoops in town. But do you care?

So we're in the midst of an NBA lockout and you're craving some hoops. With the possibility of the whole 1998-1999 season being scrapped, NBA Live might be the only place you get to see your favorite players on the hardwood. But if the rosters are wrong, do you really care?

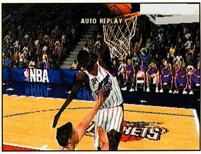
After the lockout ends, there's gonna be a flurry of roster changes stemming from trades and free agency. And NBA Live 99 will have none of them. But, what it does have is vastly improved gameplay and graphics.

Let's start with the biggest improvement, and that is the game's upgraded artificial intelligence. NBA Live has always been an easy game to beat when playing the computer, but that's no longer the case. The CPU now has a coherent offense that will take advantage of your defensive shortcomings, and it also plays better man-to-man coverage on defense. While there are too many steals and blocks, and you can hit your man by throwing a pass the length of the court a little too easily, NBA Live's gameplay is absolutely topnotch—especially when playing the game with a few friends. If it seems a little too realistic for your tastes Live now has an Arcade Mode that gets rid of the whistles and adds a host of over-the-top dunks.

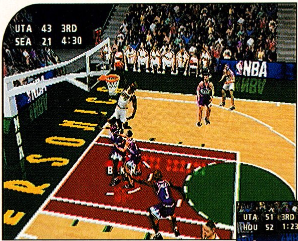
The other major addition to Live 99 are the texture-mapped player faces that change to show emotion while on the court. After dunks, players scream and glare intensely, and in other situations they might smile. It's eerie how closely their faces look like the real thing. While it's not something you notice often, it is a nice touch. To tell you the truth, I wish that EA would concentrate more on getting the frame-rate a little higher in the game. The 3D graphics look great and animate well, but a faster frame-rate would have been the icing on the cake.

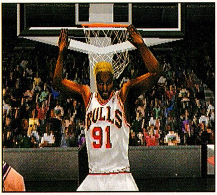
Nevertheless, this is a great update to the Live series. I just don't look forward to reworking all the rosters.

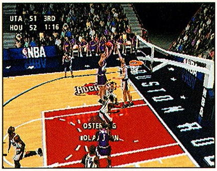
—Kraig Kujawa

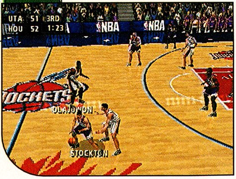


The player faces are best used to show their emotion during and after a dunk.









There's loads of new crossover dribble moves and dekes that'll help you push up the court and into the paint (above).

Box Score

Pros

- Improved AI
- Innovative graphics
- Tons of options and features

Cons

- Frame-rate needs to be a tad higher
- Too many blocks and steals
- Rosters will be ridiculously wrong whenever the NBA season finally does start

"NBA Live's gameplay is absolutely topnotch—especially when playing the game with a few friends."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

● ● ● ● ○

Rating

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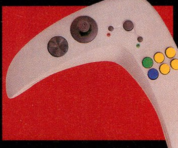
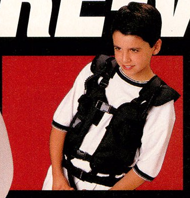
1-900-PRE-VIEW

REMOTE WIZARD WIRELESS FOR PS



BOOMERANG64



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Developer	Capcom
Publisher	Capcom
Genre	Fighting

1~4 Players

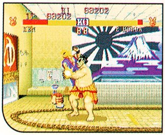
Memory Card 1 block

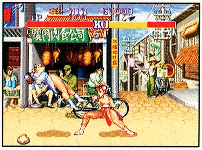
Street Fighter Collection 2

The classics you've been waiting for

I enjoyed the first Street Fighter Collection as much as the next SF nut, but this is the collection everyone has been waiting for. The original SFII was the brawler that started the craze, and I can still remember the first time I fumbled my way through the confusing (at the time) six-button control scheme at the local arcade. It wasn't until the home version release of the original that the madness truly kicked into high gear and that brings us to the second installment Street Fighter II: Champion Edition.

All the action is faithfully re-created on the PlayStation, and I can swear it's very close to arcade perfect. After playing through the third and most eagerly awaited title in the collection, SFII Turbo, I can say that the conversion is right up there. This is a must-have collection, especially because of the extras that Capcom has thrown in. There is a training mode for each of the titles and even oodles of supplemental material that makes it a great collector's piece. As an added incentive, there are more goodies that can be unlocked when you beat each of the titles. Whether reliving past battles or grabbing a piece of fighting history, Street Fighter Collection 2 is a good bet. *—Wataru Maruyama*





Who can forget finally being able to play same character vs. same character in Street Fighter II: Championship Edition?

Box Score

Pros	Cons
• Arcade perfect • Bonus materials • Classic gameplay	• Similar titles • Loading times

● ● ● ○ ○

OPM Rating

Developer	Capcom
Publisher	Capcom
Genre	Fighting

1or 2 Players

Memory Card 1 block

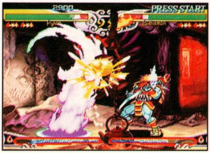
DarkStalkers 3

The Night Warriors return in style

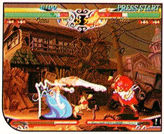
One of the darker moments in Capcom history had to be when they were forced to release a subpar version of the first DarkStalkers on the PS. Being unfamiliar with the hardware at the time, they had another company program the game and were faced with salvaging the remains for a releasable product.

That's water under the bridge now, and we can finally enjoy a great fighting game featuring the warriors of the night. DarkStalkers 3 has smooth gameplay that is responsive and true to the arcade. All the combos happen the way they're supposed to and there aren't any of the annoying delays in commands that plagued the earlier conversion. There is one area where DarkStalkers 3 falls a bit short and that is in audio quality. It's still very good, but not quite as good as SF Alpha 2 on the PS, resulting in voice samples having too much treble in them and the music not seeming as rich. Some nice extras are the Training mode and the cool Edit mode similar to the one in Pocket Fighter. You can edit your character's names and even their color palettes, which is quite fun.

All in all, this is a great fighting title with lots of characters and options that will keep you busy for a long time. *—Wataru Maruyama*



The animation in DS3 may fall just short of the arcade, but more importantly the play is right on.



Box Score

Pros	Cons
• Smooth gameplay • Edit mode • Vibrant colors	• Missing animation frames • Some sound problems

● ● ● ● ○

OPM Rating

The

Bust A Groove™

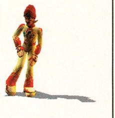
Flip book

Cut squares, assemble in order and staple.

STARRING **HEAT**

1

2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Bust A Groove
PlayStation

989 STUDIOS

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PlayStation®

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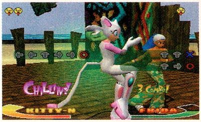
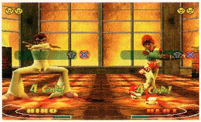
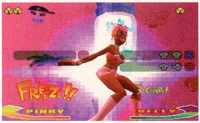
ENIX


CHILLIN'!
3 COMBO!
KITTY-N
FRIDA


4 COMBO!
4 COMBO!
HIRO
HEAT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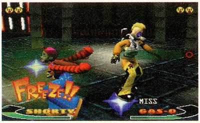
3 COMBO!
PINKY
KELLY


FREEZE!!
MISS
SHORTY
GAS-O

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Heaton
HELITE-D
CAPITALS
PlayStation
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
NHLPA
KillerGame

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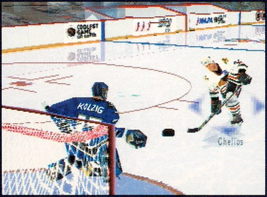
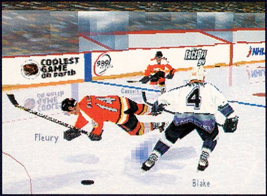
DO YOU GO STICKSIDE, GLOVESIDE, OR THROUGH THE LITTLE LOOP IN THE LACE OF HIS RIGHT SKATE?


COOLEST GAME on earth
KOLZIG
Chelios


COOLEST GAME on earth
989
FaceOff 99
NHL
Cassels
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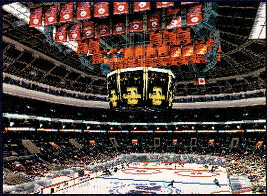
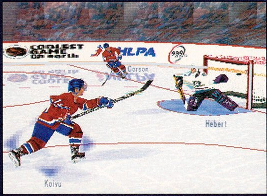
4
Fleury
Blake

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Corson
Hebert
Koivu

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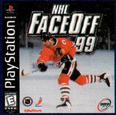
PlayStation
NHL FACEOFF 99
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989

Developer	Appaloosa/AndNow
Publisher	MGM Interactive
Genre	Action

PlayStation
TINY TANK

1 Player

Memory Card 1 block

Analog Controller Compatible

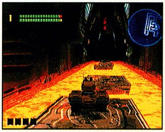
Tiny Tank

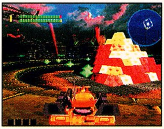
Tiny talks the talk but can't walk the walk

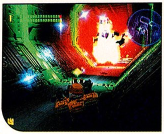
It's impossible to talk about Tiny Tank like a rational person before you turn off the in-game voices. With the little guy spouting off stale one-liners literally every five seconds, this review was almost "SHUT UP!" repeated 50 times. But now that it's off, I feel like I can comment on the rest of the game.

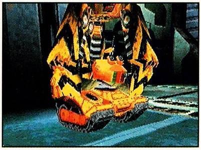
Because of the autoaiming and a ridiculously stupid enemy AI, you probably won't notice any major control problems through almost the first third of this platformer/shooter hybrid. But once you reach the later levels and require precise movement and jumping, you learn that this tiny tank handles about as sloppily and sluggishly as his real-life, full-sized counterparts. The intense slowdown caused by even a single explosion doesn't help matters—often you have to wait a few seconds for the screen to clear up just to see what the hell is going on. The graphics are otherwise fair, occasionally even impressive, with lots of colored lighting effects—but when they grind the gameplay to a halt constantly, what's the point?

The one thing this game does have going for it are the imaginative levels—instead of just "kill everything," a nice variety of puzzles are cleverly worked into almost all the stages. But, unfortunately, without a good game around it, even they are wasted in Tiny Tank. ***—Mark MacDonald***









Oh, were you trying to say something, Tiny Tank? It's hard to understand you when your head is being ripped off by a giant clamp! Muhuehahahahaha!

Box Score

Pros
- Clever level design and puzzles
- Some nice lighting effects

Cons
- Sloppy control
- Lots and lots of slowdown
- Extremely annoying voices and story

●●◐○○

OPM Rating

Developer	Koei
Publisher	Koei
Genre	Fighting

PlayStation
DESTREGA
KOEI

1 or 2 Players

Memory Card 1 block

Analog Controller Compatible

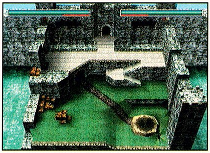
Destrega

The best original fighter since Bushido Blade

Truly original fighting games don't come along very often, and ones worth a damn are even more rare. Not that the latest evolution in 2D or 3D fighters is a bad thing per se, but it's great to see once in a while a game like Destrega that tries something new and pulls it off.

Destrega takes the free-roaming gameplay and large open arenas of Bushido Blade one step further, then adds both a great long-range projectile attack system (with three buttons for fast, powerful or large spells you can combine for different effects) and a simple hand-to-hand close combat. Like any good fighting game, it's easy to grasp the basics of the controls, but mastery of the subtleties only comes with experience.

The one-player Story Mode is interesting but disappointing at the same time—told in real-time cutscenes, the plot is intriguing but only the first time through, and the voices sound like they were recorded inside a tin can. With all the other play modes, though (Time Attack, Team Battle, Practice, Endurance and more), you won't miss it much. Definitely check out Destrega if you're looking for a unique, quality fighting game.
—Mark MacDonald



Look how far the camera zooms back, and you can still fight from even this far away!

DOYLE
DOYLE

TOTAL DMG:140
TOTAL DMG:0
DAMAG:0

Box Score

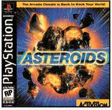
Pros
- Original controls and gameplay
- Huge arenas to fight in
- Six different play modes

Cons
- Some weak voice acting
- Story Mode only good once

●●●●○

OPM Rating

Developer	Syrox
Publisher	Activision
Genre	Action



1 or 2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Controller Compatible

Asteroids

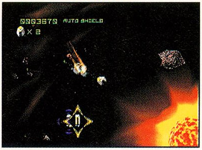
Believe it or not, blasting rocks is still fun

I must admit, it was a little weird when I finished Metal Gear Solid and then moved right on to playing Asteroids. Yet the fact that I still enjoyed this simple rock-blasting game even after playing the PlayStation's best game speaks volumes about the value of pure gameplay—the foundation from which this game is built.

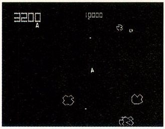
The best thing Activision did when remaking Asteroids is stick to the fundamentals that made this game great so many years ago. They resisted the temptation to radically force-fit the gameplay into a 3D world, keeping it in its familiar 2D setting. But that doesn't mean all this rock busting isn't pretty. In fact, from the picturesque backgrounds (that include a flaring sun and a deadly black hole) to the spectacular exploding debris, the graphics are pretty darn good. When you add to this a few different ships to control (each with unique strengths and weaknesses), a cooperative two-player mode, large boss ships, loads of power-ups and even the classic Asteroids game, this title is surprisingly deep and packs plenty of punch. At the very least, it's definitely one of the best classic arcade remakes I've played.

—Kraig Kujawa

AUTO SHIELD
x 1



Backgrounds become hazards. Here, the sun will often shoot deadly solar flares into the playfield (above).



AUTO SHIELD
x 4

Box Score

Pros

- Keeps classic gameplay intact
- Good graphics
- Classic game included

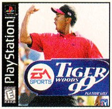
Cons

- A better soundtrack would have been nice

●●●◐○

OPM Rating

Developer	Electronic Arts
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Genre	Sports



1~4 Players
Memory Card 1~6 blocks
Analog Controller Compatible

Tiger Woods 99 PGA Tour Golf

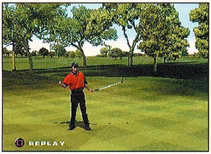
EA roars with their best PS golf game yet

If Sony's arcade-paced Hot Shots Golf was combined with EA's previously slow yet realistic PGA Tour games, Tiger Woods 99 is exactly the kind of golf game you would get.

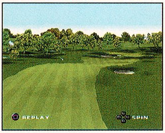
Filled with style and substance, and a whole lot of cheese, Tiger Woods 99 is a great golf simulation that tries a little too hard to convey attitude, a unique feel, and the sense that "Hey, this is a Tiger Woods golf game!". It's hard to blame EA. They paid a lot of money for the license and they're gonna make use of it. But really—does every feature have to have some "hip" title or Tiger's name attached to it?

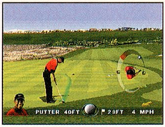
No matter, the gameplay is what counts, and EA has finally delivered a fun and realistic PlayStation golf simulation. Tiger Woods 99's 3D graphics are very good and don't bog down the gameplay from shot to shot. By viewing the ball in flight through a variety of quick camera cuts, the game feels fast paced, yet still retains all the intricacies that serious golfers expect (different types of shots, fielding aids, etc.). There are a ton of features, plenty of game modes, practice greens and five different PGA courses, making this a ridiculously in-depth game in addition to an entertaining one.

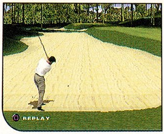
—Kraig Kujawa



If you make a good shot with Tiger, he's damned well gonna let you know about it (above).







Box Score

Pros

- Fast gameplay
- Lots of modes
- Five courses
- Gameplay is very configurable

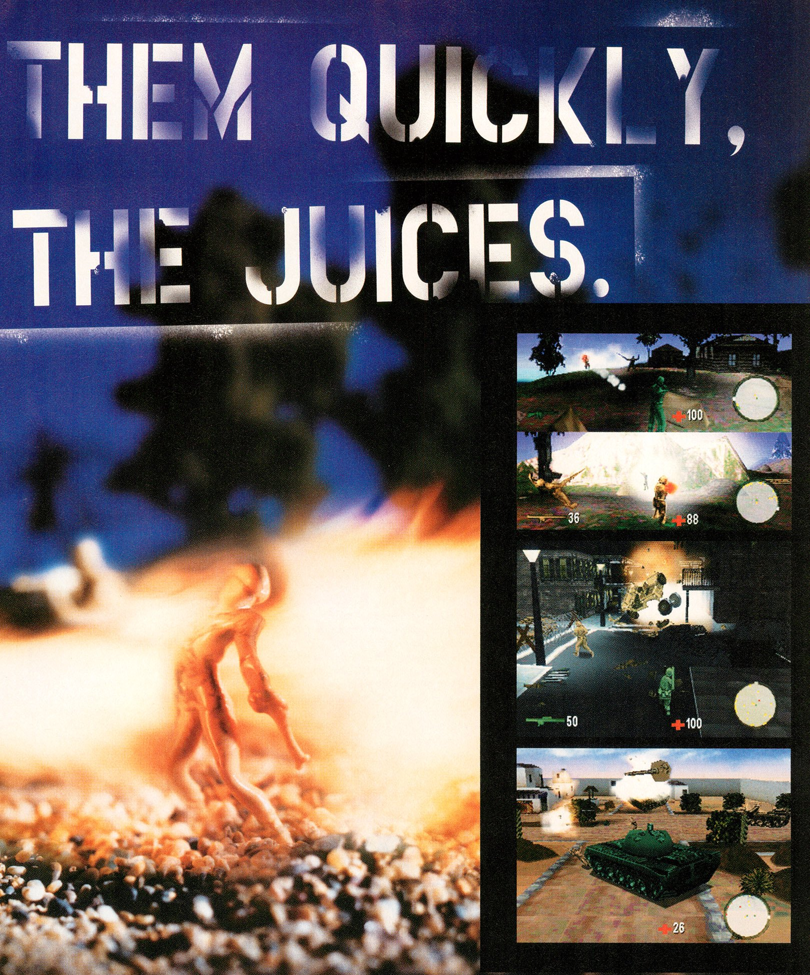
Cons

- Music and Tigerisms get tiring quickly
- Tigeresque features are a overdone

●●●●○

OPM Rating

BY COOKING
YOU SEAL IN
ARMY MEN 3D
REAL COMBAT. PLASTIC MEN.™



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PlayStation

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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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Review Recap Holiday Buyer's Guide

What to buy your PlayStation-loving loved ones

A roundup of the best games for the holiday season

Can you believe it's almost Christmas? My, how time flies. Of course, you've bought all your presents by now, right? What's that? You've been playing Metal Gear Solid instead of shopping? You still haven't found the perfect PlayStation game for that special someone? Well, you've come to the right place. On these pages you will find the most concise buyer's guide anywhere. We've collected for you the best of the best, the top picks throughout the history of *OPM*. These are the games that everyone has talked about, the games that have made the PlayStation the incredibly successful platform that it is. Bottom line, these are the games you should buy if you haven't already—and the gifts your loved ones will love you for giving. Remember, however, that the five-disc ratings you see here don't mean the games are perfect. We know as well as anyone that there will never be a perfect game. These are simply the best games in their category. So what are you waiting for...*Christmas*? Get out there and make it a PlayStation holiday!

Ace Combat 2

The sequel to Namco's hit game of airborne combat introduces advanced enemy fighter plane artificial intelligence as well as a host of new missions. The challenge of racing down a narrow ravine under enemy radar is just one example of the overall increased difficulty from the original version. The option of using a wingman offers assistance to those who have trouble flying the missions solo. With an array of distinct aircraft to earn, this is easily the PlayStation's best game of air-to-air fighter combat.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

Castlevania: SotN

The latest installment in the venerable Castlevania series was hailed by many as the best game of 1997. Following the adventures of the half-vampire Alucard as he seeks to put an end to Dracula's influence once and for all, Castlevania offers some of the best platform/adventure/RPG action on any system. With an impressive assortment of enemies, items, magic spells and other goodies, the game allows players to equip Alucard with various weapons and armor to best suit his needs and the gamer's playing style. The possibility of three separate endings adds a great deal of replayability—as if the superb graphics and haunting soundtrack aren't enough to keep players coming back for more. A must-have for any gamer.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

Colony Wars

Psygnosis' game of space combat wowed players and viewers alike from its earliest stages of development. Spiced with some of the greatest graphics of any PlayStation title, this gripping space saga is enhanced by great controls and a relatively non-linear story line. Players are able to pilot an entire arsenal of unique spacecraft in an assortment of varied missions to help conduct a revolution against the threat of the oppressive empire. OK, so the story isn't exactly high art, but the hair-trigger controls put most other games of space combat to shame. An easy recommendation, and one we'd suggest even before its sequel, CW: Vengeance.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

Crash Bandicoot: WARPED

Come for the spectacular graphics; stay for the spectacular gameplay. The third installment of the Crash series finally manages to get everything right. A number of areas completely unlike any previous Crash game eliminate any chance of monotony. Just check out the jetbike segments—amazing to watch and a total blast to play. Nope, an old-school platformer it ain't, and there are still the occasional moments of limited 3D-inspired frustration. But this time around these moments are few and far between. Bravo!

OPM Rating ●●●●●

Final Fantasy VII

The most hyped RPG ever made good on its promise with superlative graphics, a solid game engine and an amazing story. Complaints of the game's initial linearity are squashed under its overwhelming merits. There's a huge world to explore, a universe to save and a variety of arcade-style minigames to keep things moving briskly along. RPG purists who are immune to awe complain of the overly cinematic presentation. Ignore them. Like other Final Fantasy games before it, FFVII has redefined the genre.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

Gran Turismo

You just have to sit down with Gran Turismo for one lap to realize why we've called it the greatest racing game ever. Where to begin? How about the insane number of available vehicles—166, to be exact, all of them actual makes and models (well, there are a couple concept cars) from such well-known manufacturers as Honda, Mitsubishi and Dodge. How about 11 tracks, ranging in

recap pick of the year

Metal Gear Solid

Naming this ground-breaking game as our chief recommendation for the year was a no-brainer. A beautifully cinematic presentation (with topnotch voice talent, believe it or not) is augmented by some unbelievable innovations, featuring an unprecedented degree of interaction between the player and the game.

Sure, it's a bit on the short side, especially on the easier settings. But the story is so deep and involving that you won't mind—unless you simply don't care about story. From the instant the game begins to its final explosive moments, MGS is a nonstop thrill ride that will have you playing through multiple times. Lots of nifty extras further aid replay value.

Metal Gear Solid has shown us how far video games have come, and has given us a glimpse into how far they can go. If you buy just one game this year, this should be it.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

challenge from simple to mind-numbingly difficult? How about vehicle physics so realistic that professional drivers testify to the cars' handling? And if that's not enough, how about a Replay Mode that makes you feel like you're watching ESPN? Yes, the simulation-style GT Mode is challenging. Too challenging for some? Perhaps. But there's always the Arcade Mode if you're looking for a quick fix. Bottom line? Right now, it doesn't get better than this. Go buy it now.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

Micro Machines V3

PlayStation
Micro Machines
V3

Without a doubt one of the more unorthodox racers to come along in quite awhile, Micro Machines V3 puts players at the wheel of one of a number of tiny vehicles modeled after the popular toys of the same name. Courses range from billiard tables to breakfast tables, with familiar items like playing cards and cereal boxes serving as jumps and other obstacles for the miniscule racers. While it's good, clean fun in Single-player Mode, the multiplayer capabilities bring out the worst in everyone. This unusual take on multiplay (which, granted, takes a bit of getting used to) awards points only when just one player remains on the screen. This means you'll resort to just about anything to knock your opponents off the track, resulting in some uproarious multiplay. Don't miss it!

OPM Rating ●●●●●

Moto Racer

PlayStation
Moto Racer

This is an exhilarating motorcycle/dirtbike racer with beautiful controls courtesy of well-implemented analog support. Exceptional graphics and 10 solid tracks keep the player coming back for more. It's practically a toss-up whether to buy Motor Racer or MR2. Although its sequel includes more tracks, more options and a track editor, the basic engine isn't quite as superb. In the end, it depends on what you prefer: a limited game with a rock-solid engine or a more extensive game with less under the hood. Personally, we recommend the original by a hair.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

NFL Blitz

PlayStation
NFL Blitz
Midway

"Oh, that HAD to hurt!" Midway's smash arcade hit has finally hit the PlayStation, and to everyone's surprise the console version actually more than does the arcade version justice. If you haven't played the original version yet, come out from under that rock and pay attention: Blitz takes nearly every rule of football and throws it out the window. First downs now take 30 yards, roughing the passer is encouraged, and best of all, there's no such thing as pass interference. In some ways, the PlayStation version actually surpasses the arcade. Throw in Dual Shock support and Tournament and Season Modes and you've got one excellent port on your hands. Fast, addictive, brutal and just plain fun.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

PaRappa the Rapper

PlayStation
PaRappa the Rapper

This is a game that is so unusual as to be almost indescribable. To help PaRappa (a lonely, two-dimensional dog with a penchant for infectious rhymes) capture the heart of his floral sweetheart, Sunny Funny, players must repeat raps delivered to them by a rhyming onion, moose, frog, chicken and spider. Sound odd? You have no idea. Still, its loveable characters, positive message and supremely catchy musical numbers make PaRappa both charming for younger players and hopelessly enjoyable for discerning adults. The ability to go "freestyle" with an original arrangement adds an element of creativity that even the most rhythmically challenged will find captivating. Do yourself a favor and give it a try.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

Resident Evil 2 (dual shock)

PlayStation
RESIDENT EVIL 2
Dual Shock Version
CAPCOM

Capcom, notorious for milking their successful franchises, has managed to come up with yet another package in which to sell Resident Evil by adding support for the now-standard Dual Shock controller to a slightly modified RE2. The game includes a new Rookie Mode and a superchallenging Extreme Battle Mode, and the Dual Shock support is implemented well. If you own the original version, of course, there probably isn't enough new here to justify the purchase. But if you haven't bought RE2 yet, this is the logical choice, as it is—gimmicks and all—at least a bit better than the original version, which was already an excellent game.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

Riven: The Sequel to Myst

PlayStation
RIVEN
THE SEQUEL TO MYST
Acclaim

This complex, cerebral collection of puzzles is superior to Myst in every way. Amazingly photorealistic graphics, stunning sound and puzzles that are more sensibly integrated into the game help players lose themselves in the touching story. Some graphics and sound glitches mar this work of art, but only slightly. Be warned: This game offers one heck of a challenge to your puzzle-solving abilities. If you thought Myst was too tough, you're in for a living hell. And, of course, the graphics don't look *quite* as sharp as on the PC. But if you like games that are thought-provoking, you'll love Riven.

OPM Rating ●●●●●

Tekken 3

PlayStation
TEKKEN 3
namco

This game takes the superb engine of Tekken 2 and adds some truly unique new characters, two extra play modes and even more impressive graphics to arrive at what is simply the greatest fighter ever. Just check out Eddy Gordo's moves if you need proof. How will they ever top it?

OPM Rating ●●●●●

Ratings at a Glance

Brave Fencer Musashi	●●●●○
Broken Sword: SotT	●●●●○
Crash Bandicoot 2	●●●●○
Dead or Alive	●●●●◐
Diablo	●●●●○
Einhänder	●●●●○
Elemental Gearbolt	●●●●○
Final Fantasy Tactics	●●●●○
Formula 1 98	●●●●○
Forsaken	●●●●○
G.Darius	●●●●○
Ghost in the Shell	●●●●○
Heart of Darkness	●●●●○
Hot Shots Golf	●●●●○
ISS Soccer 98	●●●●◐
Kartia	●●●●○
Madden NFL 99	●●●●◐
MediEvil	●●●●○
MLB 99	●●●●○
Moto Racer 2	●●●●◐
NASCAR 99	●●●●○
NCAA Football 99	●●●●◐
NCAA GameBreaker 99	●●●●○
Need For Speed III	●●●●○
NFL GameDay 99	●●●●◐
NHL 99	●●●●○
NHL FaceOff 99	●●●●○
OW: Abe's Exoddus	●●●●◐
OW: Abe's Oddysee	●●●●○
One	●●●●○
Parasite Eve	●●●●○
Pool Hustler	●●●●○
Roll Away	●●●●◐
Street Fighter EX + α	●●●●○
Tales of Destiny	●●●●○
Tomb Raider	●●●●○
Tomb Raider II	●●●●◐
Tomba	●●●●○
Vigilante 8	●●●●○
WarGames: Defcon 1	●●●●○
WWF War Zone	●●●●○
Xenogears	●●●●○

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By not giving to others, you shall be lonely at the top.
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Because in this life, and the next,
what goes around,
comes around.

◆

If you
choose
not to give
to your
friends,
you may
have to
give up your
friends.

◆

If you
choose not to
give to your
friends,
you will
remain the
amateur little
novice
your friends
always said
you were.

◆

If you
choose
not to accept
the characters
that others have
created,
you will learn
nothing,
remain stagnant,
and die
an early,
painful
death.

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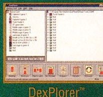

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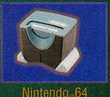


Nintendo®64

Does your girl turn
her nose up at the sight
of you sitting in front of
your PlayStation?
Allow our experts to
show you how to
turn her on...
to the PlayStation, we mean.
SONY
PlayStation

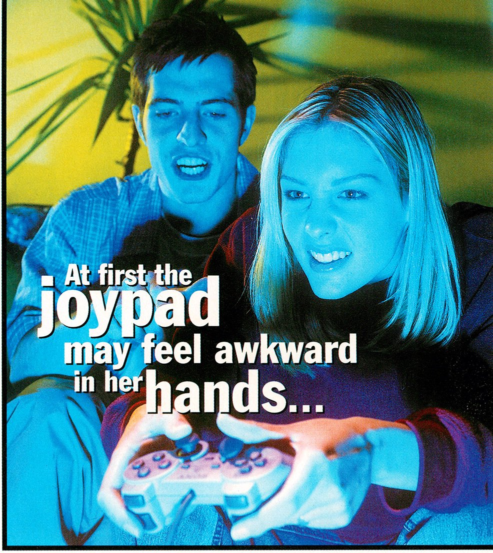
10 Games your Girlfriend will play

text by Nikki Douglas
photos by Rafael Fuchs

There she is, the light of your life, standing in the doorway to the (insert: den, bedroom, living room, home office), hands on her hips, making that face that makes you instantly scroll through in your head the things you've done that could have ticked her off. Then you realize you are holding the PlayStation Dual Shock controller as it vibrates in your hand while your Test Drive 5 car is idling on the TV screen. Uh-oh. Here it comes. The "all you do is play that damn game" speech.

Fret not, young man! We can help you; we can show you the path to enlightenment. You don't want to push your girl away—no, this is about embracing her, bringing her into your world, sharing with her the kind of thrills that only a PlayStation console is capable of giving. Hold out your hand to her, good man...Nay, I say, ferry her sweetness to the (insert: couch, floor, bed, office chair) and utter these simple words: "My darling (you must call her this!), you know that this foolish device pales in comparison to the delight that is the essence of you and I could never forsake my deep, abiding (insert: love, affection, like a real lot) for you. However, if you wouldn't mind spending but a moment with me, perhaps I could show you the magic that this machine can deliver. We can do this, together. You and I. As an expression of our (insert: love; committed relationship; shallow, inconsequential fling; hot monkey love)."

If that doesn't work, we don't know what would. But we're confident it will work. Why? Because we are them. We are your girlfriends, wives and lovers. We are women, and we want you to know what we like and how you can turn us on to the PlayStation so we don't ever have to make that face again.

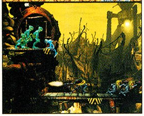


At first the joypad may feel awkward in her hands...

super puzzle fighter II Turbo

Why Your Girlfriend Will Love It: Those characters from the Capcom games are sooo cute with big heads and little bodies! (The technical term is superdeformed.) And who doesn't love a good puzzle game? She'll be pinching your cheekies when you suggest this one.

Why You Two Can Play It Together: Instead of pulling off 24-hit combos on the one female character in a regular fighting game, your girl can stack up and smash huge chains of gems while you're still strategizing: "But if I turn it this way...wait! No! Arrgh!" And you are totaled.



Why the Female Fighters Are Always So Lame: Because most of these games are designed by guys. And most of the time they would rather make the girl fighters cater solely to what males would like to see. You know what that is.

It's Also a Good Game Because: It's superaddictive. You'll be lying in bed at night (with her, right?), dreaming of new ways to set up super gem combos. (Maybe a little too addictive if this is the case.)

oddworld: abe's oddysee

Why Your Girlfriend Will Love It: It's just refreshing to see a platform game that doesn't involve looking at a woman's polygonal butt through the whole thing. And Abe is so adorable, you'll want to love him and hug him and squeeze him and call him George. Even you, Mr. Tough Guy, will giggle when Abe farts and says "Hello."

Why You Two Can Play It Together: Instead of punching or shooting your way through this game, you have to use cooperation and communication skills. Most of the guys we know could use practice in these areas. Abe's Oddysee can be, if done right, like a little encounter session for you and your girl. Besides, with the switch-off-when-you-die two-player mode, you'll have hours of fun laughing mercilessly at the other person every time he or she misses a jump and dies horribly in the same place for the 30th time. It's evil, but it's also good, clean fun that builds on the fear of being sold as a meat byproduct.

It's Also a Good Game Because: The whole concept of the game is great. You'll find yourselves saying "Follow me! Okay! Wait! Lulululululu," to each other compulsively for days after playing it. Either that or farting and saying "Hello." However you are so inclined. But is either a good thing?

Spyro the dragon

Why Your Girlfriend Will Love It: Spyro falls into that cute, fuzzy, awwwww, game category (much like PaRappa the Rapper), but Spyro is also a graphically gorgeous game that's fun, challenging and looks for all the world like Uncle Walt (as in Disney) had a hand in creating the little bugger. One look at Spyro breathing fire and flying with his teeny (girls usually like tiny,

Editors' Picks for Settin' the Mood

Jeopardy!
As much as we hate to say it, games based on game shows are pretty fun. You might also try Wheel of Fortune, etc.

Namco Museum Vol. 3
Ms. Pac-Man is the key game in this compilation. Who can resist the nostalgia and fun of this timeless game that paved the way for characters in games? She'll like Dig Dug as well.

Myst
Hardcore gamers groan that that this game always tops the charts, but there's a good reason why. Women love it.

Tetris Plus
Tetris is possibly the most popular game of all time, for good reason. Anyone can learn how to play it well within a matter of minutes—like your girlfriend, for example.

delightful things) wings and your girlfriend will about bust. The cute odometer will definitely be in the redzone.

Why You Two Can Play It Together: Platform games are good to play together—in kind of a gamepad-hand-off you-play-through-this-section-I'll-play-through-that way. Spyro is not so cute, though, that you will become annoyed. It's a great 3D platformer and Stewart Copeland (remember The Police, before Sting was tantric and "Every Breath You Take" was ripped off by Sean "Puffy" Combs...ah, the good old days) does the music, which is terrifically atmospheric.

Why This Game Might Be a Little Annoying: Spyro is a charming little fellow, but sometimes it seems like the developers tried a little too hard to make him seem so precious. With the overindulgences of pastel colors, cheesy voices and darling characters (including some enemies), you'll probably need a break or two to breathe in some harsh reality for just a few minutes.

Tekken 3

Why Your Girlfriend Will Like It: Instant gratification. Just put the controller in her hands and watch her light up as she punches you to the ground. It's a lot like thrill of a pillow fight, a chance to be aggressive without getting hurt. And there's none of that icky blood or those bouncy boobs that are a mainstay of so many other fighters.

Why She'll Love It: Picture that ashen look on your face the first time she beats you. (Believe us, it'll happen—and no crying that you weren't trying!) Now picture that defeated look as seen by your girlfriend. Talk about eating humble pie! Just be prepared to hear about your whuppin' for a *long* time.

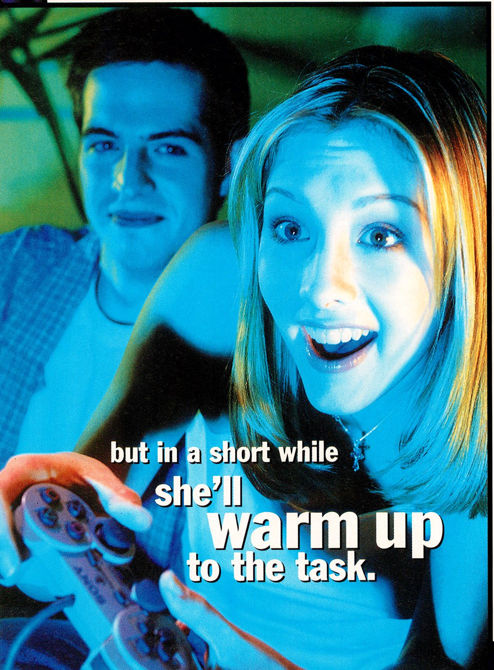
Why You Two Can Play It Together: While Tekken 3 is chock full of spicy combos and difficult special moves, it's also a button-masher's dream. And that's great because even the most inexperienced gamer can have fun without having to spend hours in Practice Mode (but it's there if you need it!).

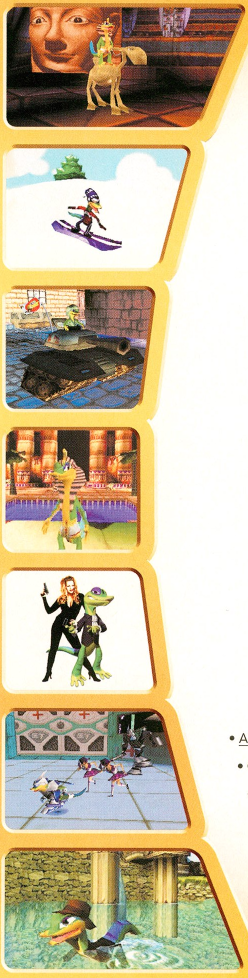
It's Also a Good Game Because: Whether she's a feminist or a girly-girl, there's a character she'll be sure to enjoy. Listen to her shout "Girl Power!" as Nina's high-heeled foot lands firmly on your face, or catch her sending Eddy into another handstand just so she can sneak a peek at his pecs.

bust a groove

Why Your Girlfriend Will Love It: Instead of the big explosions, 20-hit supercombos and other video game cliches aimed at 12-year-old boys, Bust A Groove is simply about dancing and having a good time. It's one of the rare games that wouldn't be out of place at a party. The controls are easy to pick up, and all you need to play is a sense of rhythm. Pop this one in and you might just hear, "Hey, what's that?" instead of the usual, "(*Sigh*) I'm leaving!"

Why You Two Can Play It Together: It's always the guys who are too embarrassed to hit the dance floor, isn't it? You always see two girls dancing together because somewhere their two boyfriends are sitting on their butts,





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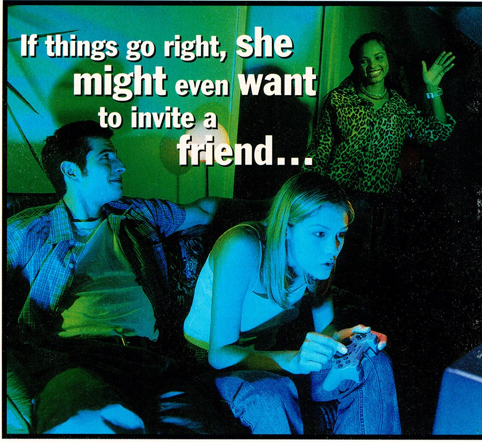
afraid they will make fools of themselves (often for good reason!). Well, with Bust A Groove's two-player simultaneous play you can finally dance together, and probably way better than you ever could in real life!
It's Also a Good Game Because: The amazing soundtrack. Everything from house to techno, hip hop to ballads, is included and makes this one that's as fun to listen to as it is to play.



If things go right, she might even want to invite a friend...

parappa the rapper

Why Your Girlfriend Will Love It: It's an adorable little dog with floppy ears who tries to impress his girlfriend with his rap prowess. After reading this feature you'll impress yours with your game selection. If you even suggest that you play this together, your girl's Hello Kitty happy face will shine throughout the night.

Why You Two Can Play It Together: Remember, if you actually do suggest to play this you will have to follow through, and that doesn't mean throwing in the towel after you get confused in your first rap. She will probably be better at this than you (it's OK, let her be better—it'll pay off in the long run) and will let out a giggle that will warm your heart. You may even find yourself humming the little raps when you're done. Heck, the guys in the PaRappa commercials did.
It's Also a Good Game Because: It's something different, yet immeasurably compelling. At its core, PaRappa is composed of very simple gameplay that isn't at all much different than a game of Simon Says. The presentation of the game is what makes this title so original. The quirky art direction, the amusing tunes and the unbelievably sappy story combined with smatterings of humor make this one a no-brainer.

10 Games Your Girl Will NEVER Play

1. Duke Nukem: A Time to Kill
Duke likes to offer money to strippers so they shake their booties at him. And you can shoot them. She won't like this one bit.

2. Dead or Alive
A fighting game that emphasizes chest movement as much as combos. Not good, and she might even feel self-conscious.

3. Colony Wars
A difficult space simulation guaranteed to evoke frustrated glares.

4. Apocalypse
It's got star power, but this mindless shooter might be the doomsday of her game playing.

5. WWF War Zone
Big, fat, sweaty guys maul each other and yell a lot in an arena.

6. All baseball games
Snorefest for a girl.

7. All football games
She probably doesn't even like to watch it on Monday night!

8. Basically any sports game.

9. Allied General
War strategy games—just say no.

10. Deathtrap Dungeon
A dark, gloomy game starring Red Lotus in a G-string. 'Nuff said.

Mr. Domino

Why Your Girlfriend Will Love It: What red-blooded American female could possibly resist this charming little guy? He's just so incredibly endearing, the way he scampers through levels leaving dominoes and mayhem in his wake but oblivious to it all the while. It's a simple and fun new angle on puzzle games, but watch out—it can be dangerously addictive. Mr. Domino could become the mysterious two-inch-tall "other man" in your relationship.
Why You Two Can Play It Together: You'll have to play some of the tougher levels over and over before you can clear them, which makes it an ideal game for passing the controller back and forth. Just watch out for that crazy look in her eyes when you insist it's your turn.
Why It Could Backfire: Mr. Domino is a stud. There's a slight

then you know that the night may end up magical...

chance that she could become more enamored with him than with you. We won't be surprised if he soon becomes more recognizable than a Baldwin brother.

cool boarders 2

Why Your Girlfriend Will Love It: While many racers are preoccupied with intricacies like accurate gear-shifting, racing physics and changing your car's oil, Cool Boarders 2's arcade-style play will make any gaming neophyte feel right at home. It also helps that snowboarding's popularity is at an all-time high.

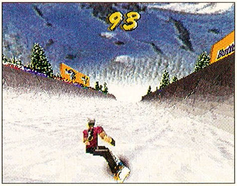
How You Two Can Play It Together: We recommend you skip the lengthy Freestyle trails or Competition Mode (save that for later, after you've perfected your skills) and just hit the slope on the Half-Pipe to try out your Fakie to backside Alley-oop 900 Shifty and your Indy Nosebone to Tweak 1080. If you are both over the age of 25 it will make you feel totally hip and in-the-know to be playing this (like it did for us), and if you are under 25 it's a good time to sharpen up your rad extreme sports lingo.

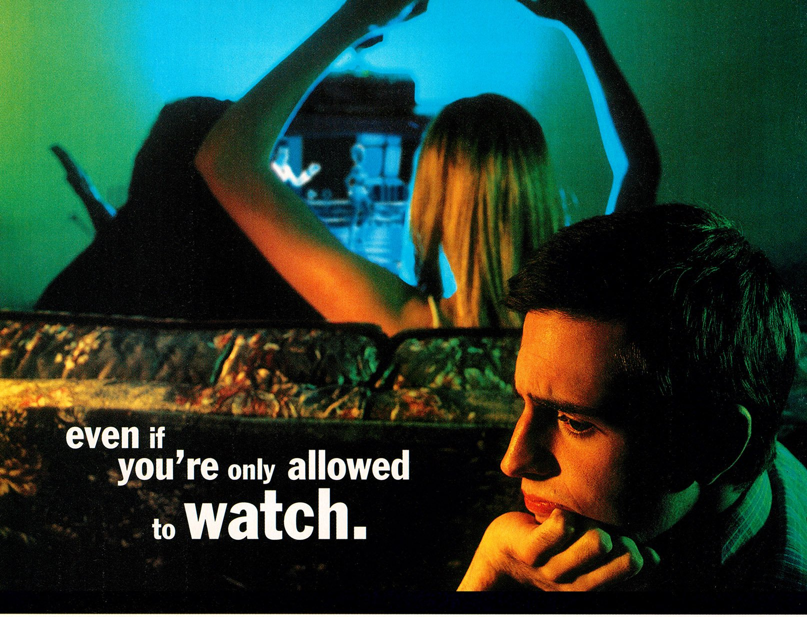
What Might Bug You: Your girlfriend will get to pick out an outfit for her snowboarder and a matching snowboard—and believe us, this could take a while. She'll want to play just to get through all the outfit/board combinations. A girl has to look good even when she's doing a killer Alley-oop Crippler 720, after all. There's nothing wrong with gaming with a little bit of style, is there? Just indulge her. She'll probably *oooh* and *ahhh* over your big jumps and board grabs anyway.

tomb raider II

Why Your Girlfriend Will Love It: Lara kicks butt, simple as that. She always stays fresh as a daisy, her braid swings the way a girl's braid ought to swing and even though your girl may have polygonal mammary envy, she'll want to try Lara on at least once to see how she fits, kind of like a Wonderbra.

Why You Two Can Play It Together: Because you already love Lara anyway and this Tomb Raider is pretty difficult and is arguably the best of the three. You could really use some help getting out of those tricky spots



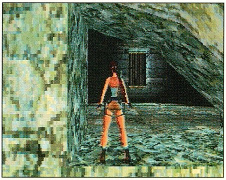


even if you're only allowed to watch.

(there are tons of them) that only a girl's ingenuity can save you from. Besides, every girl needs a chance to be the female Indiana Jones and have a huge boulder chase her down a hall lined with spikes as fire shoots out of the wall up ahead. And that's only for starters.

Why You May Want to Play This Alone: Because some things, like oiling the old baseball glove…*ahem*…need to be done when a guy is alone.

It's Also a Good Game Because: It's Lara Croft. She's a game legend. She's a pop culture icon. She has autoaiming. She's agile. She has some killer new moves (compared with the first game). It's an awesome adventure. She's chesty. What else is there you could want from a woman? Well, living and breathing would be nice.

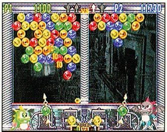


bust-a-move 4

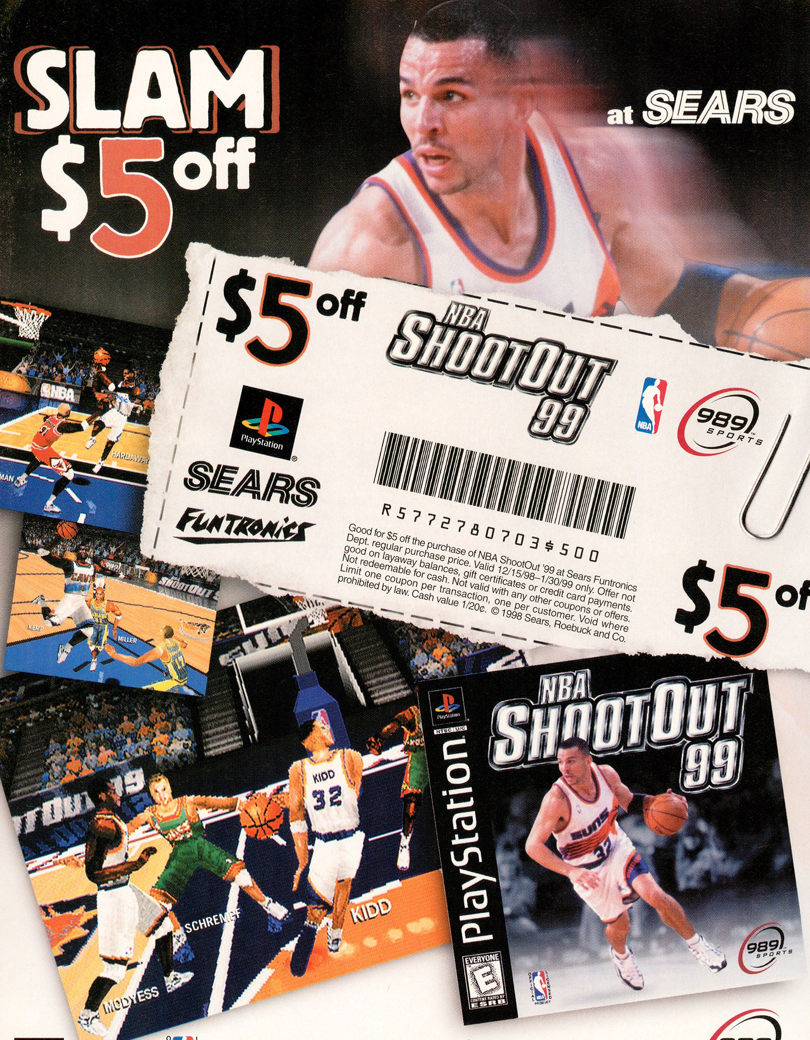
Why Your Girlfriend Will Love It: Adorable dragons and other harmless characters square off in an easy-to-learn puzzle game that involves firing big and colorful bubbles. How can any respectable girl not dig that? We know plenty of girls that do.

Why You Two Can Play It Together: Bust-A-Move 4 has a really addicting two-player competitive game that will keep the two of you glued to the television set for hours. It might even be the ultimate peacekeeper and savior of marriages. *Electronic Gaming Monthly's* editor in chief, John Davison, and his wife, Allison, use its two-player battle mode to settle arguments. Sure beats a divorce lawyer.

It's Also a Good Game Because: The one-player mode has loads of puzzles, there's plenty of gameplay variations, and there is even an option to create your own levels (you could challenge each other by making your own puzzles). Suffice to say, Bust-A-Move 4 has enough depth to be the puzzle game that the two of you could be interested in for a very long time.



GrrlGamers Sarah Calkins and Jennifer "Sparky" Sparks contributed to this article.
GrrlGamer is at www.grrlgamer.com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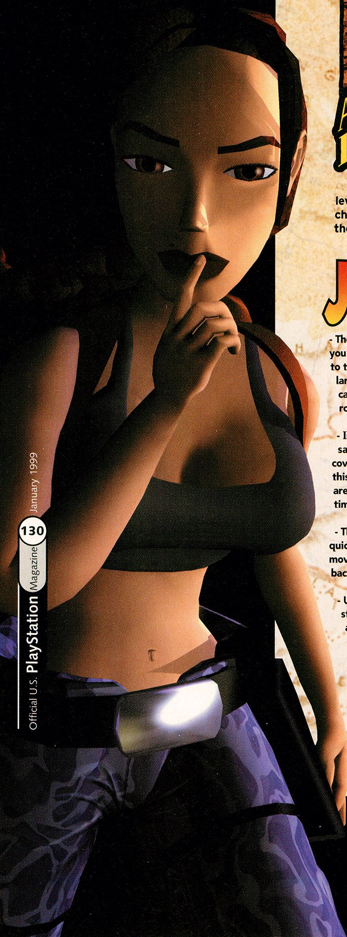
TOMB RAIDER III

ADVENTURES OF LARA CROFT

PART ONE



Lara continues her quest for adventure as her latest journey takes her across the globe in search of ancient artifacts. This month we'll walk you through the first four levels and the South Pacific Islands, exploring the multiple paths to choose from and pinpointing the locations of secret areas. The remainder of the game will be covered in its entirety next month. Welcome to the jungle...

JUNGLE

- The hill is scattered with spikes, so once you start to slide, be prepared to jump. Veer to the side to reach a flat area to grab a large medi-pack and shotgun ammo. Take caution, though, a boulder will begin rolling behind you.

- In the open area to the right of the quicksand, look for the small opening partially covered with leaves. There is a switch down this path that opens a gate in the previous area. Watch the monkeys, they will sometimes run off with items.

- Throw the switch inside the room and quickly climb onto the ledge to avoid the moving spiked wall (take one step back, then backflip to land you on the ledge).

- Use the zip line to cross the pool with the strong undertow. You will enter a forested area next and immediately be attacked by a tiger. At the bottom of a slope in this area is a switch inside a tunnel carved through a tree trunk. Pull it and a boulder will roll down toward you. Check the area where the boulder came from to find an opened gate leading to another switch. This switch opens the gate to the right of the room you are presently in.

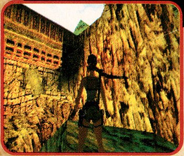
- More tigers. Check the area to the right through the foliage to find some ammo. Continue until you reach the far side of the mist-covered area (watch out for that pit of spikes) and crawl under the logs. There is a Save Crystal here and some MP5 ammo in a tree to the left of the fallen tree.

- This next area has a large opening in the floor, but be careful. The area below is designed so that you'll slide into a trap of spikes. The pitch black passageway in this lower room simply leads back to the area with the mist.

- Pass the area with the opening in the floor and go through the opening in the wall. Lara will notice a cave on the left side of the room. Walk past the spikes and climb to the cave. The cave is pitch black and has a switch at the end of the tunnel, which once thrown will release a boulder. Run back to the entrance of the cave to avoid being flattened. The switch will have opened the large gate below, freeing another tiger into the area.

- Once through the large gate you will enter an area with a pool at the far end. Watch out for the three boulders rolling toward you from the left side of this area.

Tigers will charge at you unexpectedly throughout the level. Watch out for boulders rolling from the foliage.



- Use the island in the middle of the pool to reach the limb above. Throw the switch to open the grate you can see to the left. Jump from the island to the rocks beneath the grate. This leads to a series of tree branches, ending with another ride on a zip line.

- You will now be in an area with a waterfall. Walk down the steps and turn to the right to see an opening in the wall. Head for it quickly, as two tigers will be close behind as you do. Inside the room with the pool, go to the opposite side and you will find a moveable block. Pull it forward twice to trigger the door nearby to open. Enter the room and pull the switch, opening a grate in the floor behind the block. Drop in and climb out onto the walkway to find two switches. One will open the second door in the previous area and the other will open the underwater grates. Swim through and activate the switch inside the newly opened room. This will fill the waterfall area with water.

- Climb up the base of the waterfall and make your way to the very top to find a switch. This will open the gate in the water. Follow this underwater passage to a room with a tiger and a ladder leading out. Check the corners for items. The area you emerge in is on the far side of the quicksand. The Indra Key you need to leave the area is here. If you don't see it, that monkey will have snagged it. A final tiger awaits your descent outside the gate. Check to the left of the gate for shotgun shells, then exit the level.

JUNGLE SECRETS

1 - At the very start, jump walk to the edge of the mudslide and jump to the left. You need to land at the base of the rocks to find the shotgun.

2 - Off of the first slope on the left side where the boulder rolls down, jump around the tree to find a Save Crystal and shotgun shells.

3 - Near the first Save Crystal on the waterfall are flares and shotgun shells.

4 - In the hollowed end of the fallen tree are flares and MP5 ammo.

5 - Inside the cave with the rolling boulder, return to where the boulder came from to find a hidden niche with rockets and harpoons.

6 - After the three boulders roll, search the area where they came from. Lower yourself into the pit there to find a Save Crystal and flares.

TEMPLE RUINS

- For starters, watch out for the two cobras hidden in the tall grass. If they bite you, you'll be poisoned. Your health will continue to deplete until you use a medi-pack. The cobras are both located along the wall after you walk through the hole in the tree. Just past them is a switch. It will open the grate right behind you. It leads you to the same place that jumping in the pool will, but you don't have to deal with the piranha.

While you can see the temple all around you, it will take you some time to actually enter the main structure.

- Take it slow traveling through the passageway out of this area—cobras are poised, ready to strike as you round the corners.

- The next area contains another pool. The island in the center contains a small medi-pack. The water is teaming with fish, which enjoy nibbling on human flesh. Stay in the shallows to avoid being eaten alive. There is a switch along the back wall that will open a small gate under the water along that same wall.

- You will emerge in an open courtyard of the ruins. Climb the landslide to reach the door in the upper corner.

- Here you will find a Save Crystal in the area above the first pool of water you encountered. Jump from limb to limb to find Desert Eagle ammo and flares. Cross the river using the ledges by the waterfall or jump from the tree to the rocky shore. There is a cave you need to crawl into on the other side of the pool.

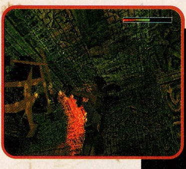
- There are a couple of cobras hiding in the shadows and around corners. After the second one is a steep slope. Slide down the right side of it to avoid being squashed by a boulder.

- The next room houses a huge statue of Shiva, but don't worry, it won't come to life. Pull the block to the right to reveal an opening into the next chamber. Now you should worry. The statue will come to life here and is a pain to kill. You will be safe where the Save Crystal is, but Shiva will be blocking your bullets. Let it chase you and fire on it quickly before it can shield itself.

- Upon defeating the statue, throw the left switch in the upper alcove to open the grate in the floor. Drop down and throw the switch to open the door to the right of the large gate. The path quickly turns to quicksand here, so keep to the wall to avoid drowning. You will then find yourself at the base of cave-in. Turn around to see an upper passage leading back in the same direction you came.

- Throw the switch you find to open the door. The trap inside is a large blade swinging on the floor, and a spiked wall will close on you. Use the dash to make it through.

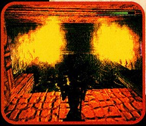
- In the next room you will find a switch on the back side of the room that opens a door above



you. Move the block found to the left of the switch to climb up to the door.

- Plunge into the water and pull the lever to open the gate. Swim through to find two more levers, which open a grate in the roof of the underwater chamber.

- The next part of the of the room has a large square pool. Pull the two side levers in it to start the flames, allowing you to see the three invisible platforms. The third lever will open the grate on the opposite side of the pool. This will only work if you have thrown the switch in the previous secret area. Use the platforms to reach the switch, which opens the door at the back of the room to the left of the statue. Hurry, though, the door stays open only briefly.



From flame-spouting statues to spiked ceilings lowering, Lara will have her hands full reaching the final chamber of the Temple Ruins.

- Inside you will find a wall of spikes at the far end of the room. Pull the switch next to it and dash to the other end of the room. The gate that blocked the last part of the room will be open and you can grab the Key of Ganesha. The door out of the room will reopen and you can make a hasty retreat. Return to where the spikes started to find some health and ammo.

- A mudslide has filled the pool with quicksand. Cross in front of the raised ledge with the switch and watch for falling debris. Climb the slope and enter the passageway. As you run up the second set of stairs, a boulder will roll toward you. Do a quick about-face and dash back to the intersection. In the next portion of the hall you'll come to two grates. Enter the one on the right. The other one requires you to get past a nasty trap. Either path will lead you to the same room, which contains another Save Crystal.

- Climb down the hole at the end of the side corridor to reach the room where you fought the statue. Pull the switch to the right of where you found the Save Crystal to open the door on the other side of the room. You will find yourself in a large room with a grate in the center. The lever here can't be pulled until you fill the room with water. Exit into the next room.

- Dive into the pool and cross to the other side to find a switch. Pull it to open the door in the water. Stay low when swimming through this passageway; poison darts will be fired straight at you. You must also be extremely careful when you emerge into the next pool, as rocky debris will begin to fall from the ceiling. You will find a ladder leading up on the left side of the room. Backflip off of the ladder to the ledge and look off to the right to see another platform. Jump across the water to reach (don't worry, you'll make it). Jump to the next ledge and turn around to jump to the ladder. Make a standing jump to the next ledge. From here you need to take a running jump to reach the ledge with the cobra on it. One more ledge and then you can leap to the hallway at the top of the room.

- As soon as you land, a boulder will roll toward you, so run straight for the right side of the room to avoid it. The room contains swinging blades and darts coming from the walls. Crawl under the blade on the left and scope out the pit in front of you.

- Jump across the pit to the Save Crystal. Now you need to do some block rearranging. Push the first block in once and the one to the right all the way until you are in the next area. From this room, push in the first block and the third block on the right once. Now push or pull the block in the middle to reveal the switch. The pool will fill in the first room of this area.

- Note the two boulders waiting to drop as you enter. As you run, they will fall and you will have to leap over a pit of spikes to escape them. Briefly dash to give you the lead and then jump to the left side of the pit. Once across, drop down the hole into the water and not onto the ledge with the spikes.

- Go to the pool, pull the lever and grab the second Key of Ganesha. Now use the keys to open the large gate back in the statue room. Jump across the pit and quickly climb the ladder before the ceiling of spikes impales you. As you enter the room with the gate, pull the block in the opposite corner as the Save Crystal. Pull the two switches above the gate, but don't be too hasty to leave. Two boulders will roll toward you as you approach the door.

- Go through the gate until it closes, then run past the fire spurts to enter a large chamber with three Shiva statues. Both of the statues on the floor will come to life, so it is important to focus on one at a time. Use the stairs at the back of the room to lose them. They will

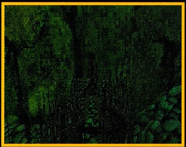
TEMPLE SECRETS

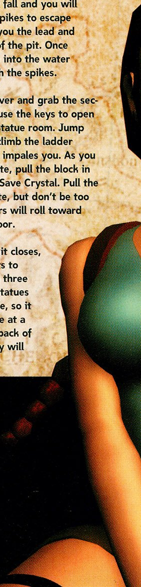
1 - Push the block in the pit where you fought the first Shiva to reveal a secret area. Crawl to avoid the darts and watch out for a boulder trap. You will find shotgun shells, flares and a small medi-pack.

2 - In the square room after the spikes and blades, use the block to reach the ledge where you will see an opening in the roof. Jump to the ladder to find a secret area with shotgun shells and an MP5 clip. Throw the switch to release an underwater door leading to a third secret.

3 - Pull center lever in pool with three levers to open the door (see Secret #2).

4 - Drop down into the pit of spikes after the room with falling debris. Crawl through the opening into a secret area to receive a Save Crystal and uzi clips. You will have to exit back into the large room with the falling debris.





RIVER SECRETS

1 - Stop at the first gap that you must jump over. Climb down to find a secret area to find shotgun shells, flares and a large medi-kit.

2 - On the upper route, check to the right when you drive down the steps onto the long, narrow rock. Jump across to find Desert Eagle and Uzi ammo, as well as a Save Crystal.

3 - There is a secret area you can reach by following the ledges on the perimeter of the canyon with the waterfall. Shimmy along the back wall to find a Save Crystal and shotgun shells. There are two vultures circling the area.

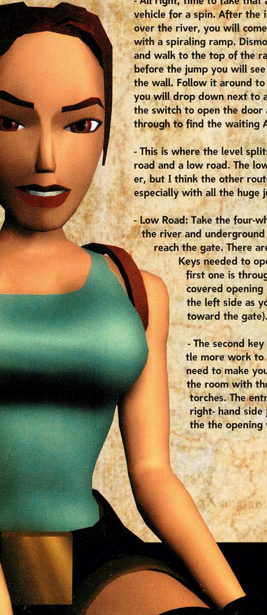
4 - After the last big jump on the high road, you can follow the rocks along the left side of the area. Tough jumping will get you to the area with Desert Eagle clips and a small medi-pack. This one is more trouble than it's worth.

follow you up, but you can jump off the edge and wait for them to come back down the stairs. This a good time to get your hits in. When they are both vanquished, search them for their Scimitars and use them on the third statue to open the gate.

- The last area (I swear) has another statue of Shiva in it, along with people suspended in midair. When you approach the one in the center the statue will come alive. After dealing with it, check the side room for a Save Crystal.

- There are three keyholes in the side room. One of the keys is under the suspended man in the other room. The second is through the door on the left side of the room just as you enter. There are two switches that need to be thrown to open the grate in the floor. The catch is, as soon as you start the spiked ceiling begins to lower very quickly. The second key is found through the grate. The last key is in the water near the Save Crystal on the right side of the chamber. A current will pull you right into the spikes once in the water. Swim to the side to get out of the current and pull the lever next to the spikes. Now swim back to the opposite wall where you entered the water and cross to the other side. The current will grab you, but you will hit an area with no current. Swim to the other lever to stop the current and grab the key. Use the three keys of Ganesha to open the door to exit this rather exhaustive level.

THE RIVER GANGES

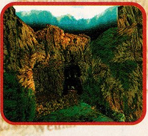


- All right, time to take that all-terrain vehicle for a spin. After the initial jump over the river, you will come to an area with a spiraling ramp. Dismount the ATV and walk to the top of the ramp. Just before the jump you will see an opening in the wall. Follow it around to the end and you will drop down next to a door. Use the switch to open the door and go through to find the waiting ATV.

- This is where the level splits into a high road and a low road. The low road is easier, but I think the other route is more fun, especially with all the huge jumps.

- Low Road: Take the four-wheeler across the river and underground until you reach the gate. There are two Gate Keys needed to open it. The first one is through a foliage-covered opening on a ledge (on the left side as you head toward the gate).

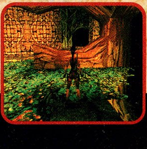
- The second key will take a little more work to retrieve. You need to make your way into the room with the burning torches. The entrance is on the right- hand side just before the the opening where you found the first key. Follow the fire-lit room until you reach the area between the gates. Climb onto the ledge over the gate with your ATV on the other side. Turn around and you will see the next area. Use the trees to reach the second floor of the structure. Go to the left to find the second Gate Key resting on a pedestal and then return to the ATV.

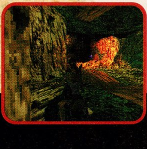


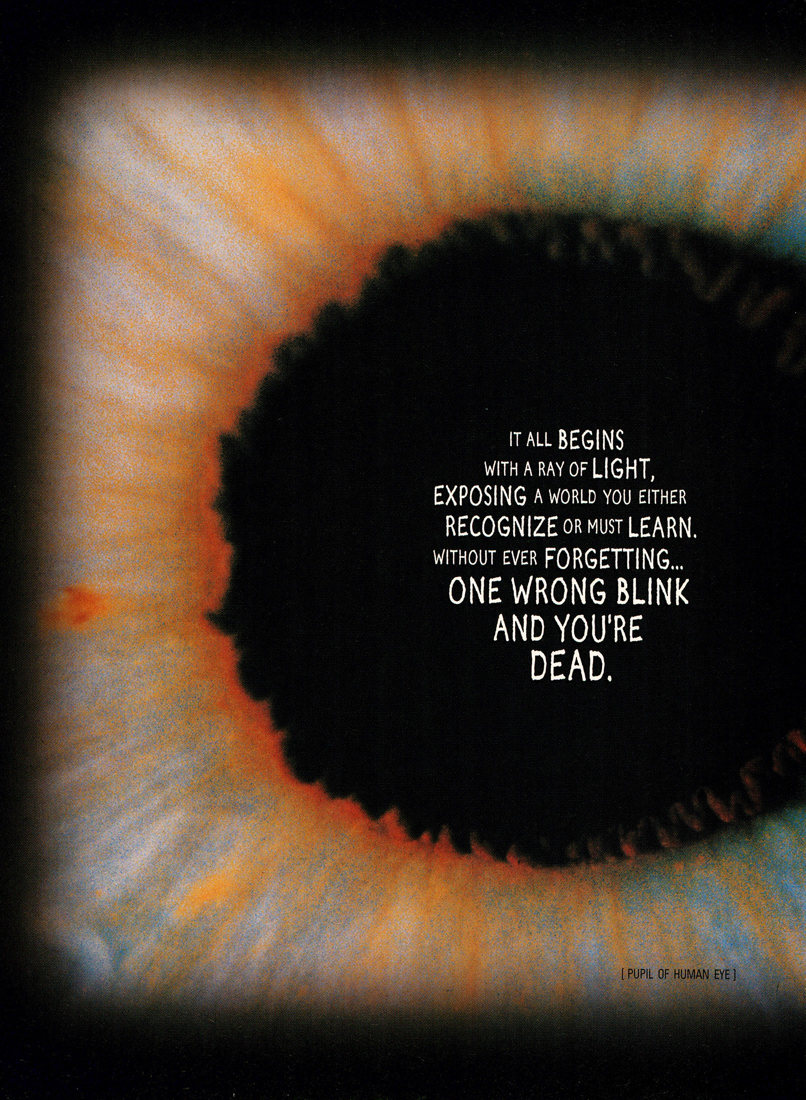
- Drive through the gates and over the river. Take the path to the right down to the waterfall. Dive into the pool below and climb out to exit the level behind the waterfall. The open area past it holds nothing of interest, except pesky monkeys and vultures.

- High Road: Drive up the left side of the slope and follow the path until you come to the steep drop off to the left. Look to the right just as you go down it (yes, on the four-wheeler) to find a secret area with a Save Crystal, an Uzi clip and harpoons. The trail will narrow into a steep incline and you will have to maneuver carefully along the exposed cliff. You will come to small gap, which is immediately followed by jumping over the river. Floor it to make both jumps.

- One more huge chasm to jump and you are almost there. You can reach the third secret area by following the ledges on the left side of the canyon. You will need to make running jumps to grab the ledges across the way. After two of such jumps, you will shimmy over and crawl into a cave to find ammo and health. Now follow the path into the cave and go to the waterfall on the left. There is a secret area you can reach by following the ledges on the perimeter of the canyon. Shimmy along the back wall to find a Save Crystal and shotgun shells. Drop into the water and climb to the exit behind the waterfall.

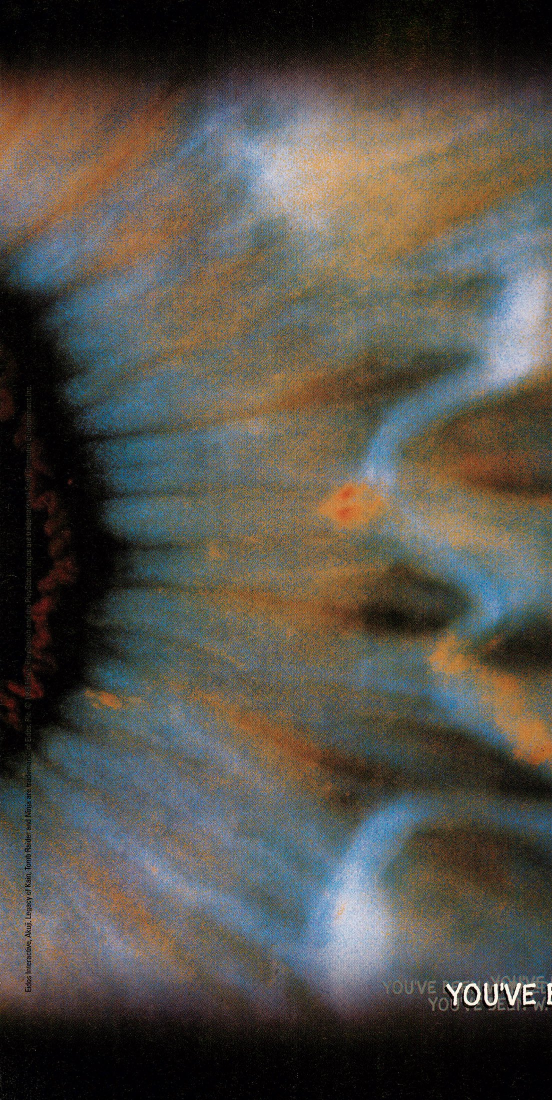






IT ALL BEGINS
WITH A RAY OF LIGHT,
EXPOSING A WORLD YOU EITHER
RECOGNIZE OR MUST LEARN.
WITHOUT EVER FORGETTING...
ONE WRONG BLINK
AND YOU'RE
DEAD.

[PUPIL OF HUMAN EYE]



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YOU'VE BEEN WARNED

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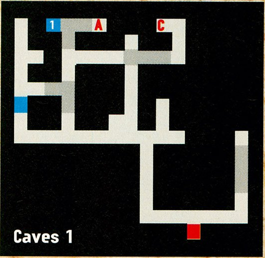
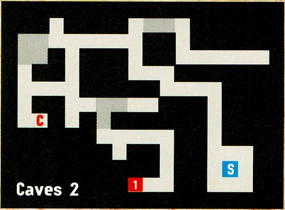
CAVES OF KALIYA

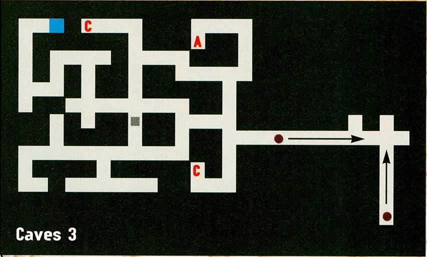
- There are two paths to take in the caves, but I suggest taking the left one. Follow the Caves 1 map until you come to exit #1. This will take you to the corresponding entrance on the Caves 2 map. From there, head to the exit with the Save Crystal over it. Taking the path to the right (Caves 3) will bring you to Caves 2 also, but you have to contend with those two boulders at the beginning of it. There isn't any other reason to take this route.

- Either path you take will lead you to a pit that will drop you into a room with eight cobras. As if that weren't enough, a boulder will come from behind as you head to the door. Why so well guarded, you ask? The level boss is next.

- This boss will start his attack with a huge explosion, transforming the water to lava. He will continue to use this attack and is designed to knock you back into the lava. He follows this by launching fireballs into the air. Move around, preferably forward and back, all the time keeping him under fire. He really doesn't take much to kill, but if one of those fireballs makes contact, you're toast. The grenade launcher is on the island opposite where you entered, with other items scattered about as well. Grab the Infada Stone and choose your adventure.







🟥	Entrance to area	C - Cobra
🟦	Exit to next area	S - Save Crystal
▨	Crawlspace	A - Ammo
■	Moveable block	
●	Boulder	

Map Key

COASTAL VILLAGE

If you don't take the Smuggler's Route, Lara will have to find the three Serpent Stones to enter the village.

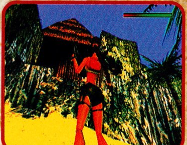
Easy Route - Slide down the steep slope from the beach. Use the block in the middle of the quicksand to cross, but watch out for poison darts once you are on it. Look to the right to find a large medi-pak. On the other side of the quicksand is a tree on the left. Climb up and follow the branches until you find the red Serpent Stone. Dont' miss the secret area in the wall behind you.

- Climb down to the ledge with the Save Crystal and cross to the ledge in the middle of the waterfall. Face the waterfall and jump through it to the left to find another Serpent Stone. Now cross to the ladder. When at the top of the waterfall, you will see another Serpent Stone on top of the temple. Climb the rocks on the left to get to it.

- Use the three Serpent Stones to pass the gates. This is where the level intersects with the Smuggler's Route (A).

Smuggler's Route - When you swim into the cove, search the bottom for the Smuggler's Key. This will allow you to enter the trapdoor inside the hut. The first cavern you come to is filled with sea water, which, unfortunately, including some saltwater crocs. Make sure the water is safe before you take a dip. There is also a native firing poison darts at you from the top of the cavern.

- Head to the torch and hang from the vine-covered rock above to cross the water. Follow the rocks around until you are on top of the



vine-covered rock you first crossed with. Slide down the rock and jump to the other side, making your way to the Save Crystal. There's another blowdart-sporting native near here to watch for. Take a standing jump from the ledge where you found the crystal, but make sure you're not right up to the edge or she'll hit her head.

- Once across the suspended bridge, go to the left. Another native will attack as you turn the corner, which also triggers a circular blade trap. Push the switch at the back of the room to close the skylight, then jump over the water. If you don't close it before you walk out, you will trigger a couple of traps.

- (A) Slide down the chute to the village below. Villagers will attack both hand-to-hand and with blowguns. The hut with the large medi-pak is filled with quicksand, so don't risk it unless you really need it. Follow the path straight until you leave the village and find a large pool of quicksand. Jump over the rock to the left to find a switch that will lower a gate over a pit of spikes. This area is behind the hut next to the Save Crystal. Go between the two and to the darkened corner on the left to find a secret area (shotgun and MP5 ammo).

- Climb to the upper huts and you will find a switch that will open the door at the bottom of the tree hut. Enter the temple and go to the right to explore the roofs of the huts. Follow the wooden walkway around until you come to a hut with a roof covered in spikes. Slide down the roof to take minimal damage. Once across, make your way to the far-upper tree hut and push the switch to cover the flames back in the temple.

- Hit the switch across the flames, then dash past the circular blades. The switch you see in the small recess with the holes in the floor is a trap, so don't touch it. Turn the lever at the end of the hall and drop down to the first section of the village.

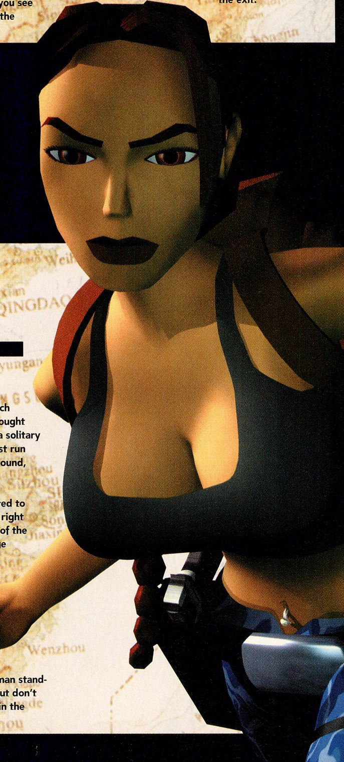
- Enter the grate that opens in the pool. The underwater passage is patrolled by a crocodile, so watch your toes. Follow the path around to the last tree hut and the exit.

VILLAGE SECRETS

1 - In the water on the beach, climb onto the rock with the small medi-pack. Jump to the rocks across the water to find some MP5 clips.

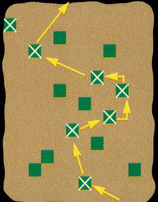
2 - (Smuggler's Route) When you come to the suspended bridge, turn to the right and jump to the rocks until you come to the grenades.

3 - Directly behind where you find the first Serpent Stone is a secret area.



CRASHSITE

Quicksand Map



The X indicates the ground that is safe to jump to.

- Follow the map to cross the quicksand to reach the mist-covered area. Oh, good. I see they brought back the raptors. Your first encounter is with a solitary one and shouldn't pose much of a problem. Just run past it to the right until you come to higher ground, then pick it off.

- Head through to the crash site and be prepared to deal with more raptors. Continue along to the right side of the plane until you see a black portion of the wall. Further investigation will reveal a passage leading to a room with dead raptors. A pack of tiny, green reptiles will attack you, but it's all worth it. You will find the MP5 here. Throw the two switches to reopen the door.

- When you return to the crash site, go to the left and down the other opening in the wall. There will be a gunman standing in the middle of a clearing. Kill him first, but don't get too close to him. Two raptors are waiting in the wings to tear you apart. Target them from the raised area around the edge.

- Slide down to the lower part of the cavern and you'll have to fight off more of the little green dinos. In the back corner of this area is a huge nest with a man's body. Get Commander Bishop's Key and then get ready to tangle with the grandaddy of dinosaurs, a T-Rex. Dash to put some distance between the two of you, then turn around and let it have it with the MP5. Two things not to do– hold your ground too long and run through the center of the pool. Good luck.

- Return to the crash and go down the slope at the back of the plane. Two gunmen will be attacking a raptor. Use the distraction to take them out. Enter the passage on the right until you come to a temple entrance. Climb up the vine-covered rock next to the branch with the raptor on it. Backflip from it and quickly hit Jump to land on the branch. Hang from the branch until the raptor gives you some room and then work your way to the raptor hanging from the rope. Shoot it down to keep the piranha busy while you pull the lever in the water. This will open the gate into the temple. Two words: raptors galore. When you enter the temple head straight for the elevated block. Use this for safety every time you are attacked, which usually follows throwing a switch. There are three switches to pull to drop the gate above you. From the elevated block, jump up and you will find Lt. Tuckerman's Key.

- Off of one of the wings of the plane you can reach a ledge. Inside the cave is a Save Crystal. Use the climbable walls and monkey bars to reach it. The two switches control whether a gate is up or down. Exit the cave via a crawlspace at the back of the cave.

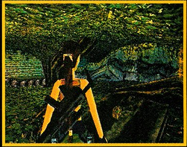
- Get back to the plane and use both keys to power it up. Go to the lower lever and hit the switch to activate the turret. Wave after wave of raptors will flood the clearing for you to blow to smithereens. Blast the brick walls in the back corner of the area to reveal the exit.

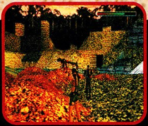
CRASH SITE SECRETS

1 - In the back corner of the quicksand are a couple of MP5 clips.

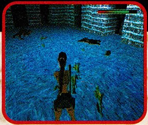
2 - From the crash site, through the opening to the room with the two raptors and the gunman, climb up the tree for a medi-pack and some flares.

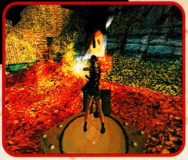
3 - At the top of the tree near the hanging raptor you will find a Save Crystal. Watch out for that live raptor!

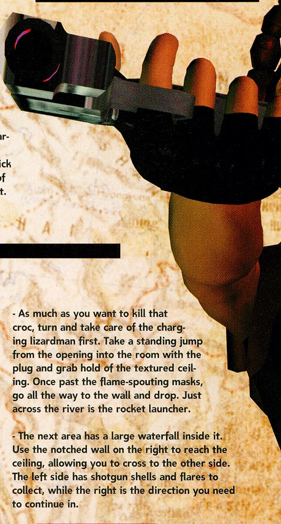




The dinosaurs you encounter here will make Jurassic Park look like Kiddie Land.







MADUBU GORGE

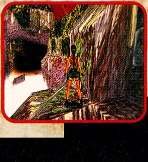
- The first matter at hand is to dispatch of the two poison-spewing lizardmen that attack you. Climb down the rocks and jump to the block in the center of the river. Take a running leap to the other side and work your way to the Save Crystal. Hit the switch and shimmy back as far as you can to the right. Continue all the way to the right until you come to a switch. Push the switch and head back across the river. To do so, position yourself with block in the river behind you. Now climb up and backflip to it.

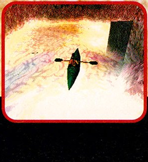
- Climb up into the hole where the bats flew from. The gate here is now open for you to enter. The kayak awaits below. Paddle around a little before embarking downstream to get a feel for the control.

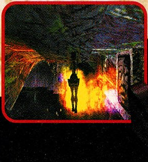
- Kayaking can be quite hazardous if you don't know what you're doing. For starters, when going over a sizeable drop, backpaddle to cushion your landing. Making sharp turns is possible by holding R1 and then the direction you want to turn. This helps greatly in maneuvering through tight spots. Of course, this particular river is lined with traps, which will be set off when you cross a red rope and turned off by crossing a green one. At the first fork you come to, take the left side. There is a painful trap to go through, but there is a secret area behind the waterfall after it. All the branches end up in a central cavern with a giant stone plug. Look for the slower rapids moving up and paddle until you reach the pool with the crocodile in it. This is where you must exit the kayak into the water with a lurking crocodile.

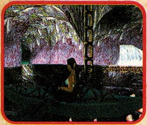
- As much as you want to kill that croc, turn and take care of the charging lizardman first. Take a standing jump from the opening into the room with the plug and grab hold of the textured ceiling. Once past the flame-spouting masks, go all the way to the wall and drop. Just across the river is the rocket launcher.

- The next area has a large waterfall inside it. Use the notched wall on the right to reach the ceiling, allowing you to cross to the other side. The left side has shotgun shells and flares to collect, while the right is the direction you need to continue in.









- Jump across the swinging blades to the platform and then to the notched wall. Climb until you reach the top of the next set of falls and then climb down the side of the hole.

- There are two boulders to outrun in the next passageway: one before the first step up and the other once you reach the green portion of the passage. The next room you enter has another boulder to avoid as you continue to the left. Jump over the fire and then backflip twice to elude a fourth and final boulder.

- Continue rock hopping until you reach the zip line, taking you to the top of the plug. Climb up the wall of faces and prepare for a couple of lizardmen. Pull the switch on the side to pull the plug, forming a monstrous whirlpool.

- Drop down to the area you left your kayak and get in. Paddle into the whirlpool and you will drop to a lower pool. Watch out for that crocodile. There's a lever under the water to pull that will open the gate to the exit along with releasing two more crocs.

- There is an alternative, more difficult route to take to reach a kayak. From the start of the level, jump across the river and shimmy to the left. Jump up to grab the notched rock and work around to the cave entrance.

- Climb down the wall to avoid the spikes down the corridor to the right. At the next junction, take the crawlspace to reach a Save Crystal. Return and continue to find the switch opening the gate where you first entered the cave. Once through the gate you must jump to the waterfall. Go inside and cross using the ceiling. Take a running jump over the Save Crystal and grab the third pillar. That middle pillar will ignite if you land on it. The next cave has another Save Crystal. Use the ceiling to get across to the opening in the far wall and you will find yourself in the chamber with the kayak.

MADUBU GORGE SECRETS

1 - After taking the easy-to-reach kayak, take the first fork in the river to the right. A Save Crystal is behind a waterfall.

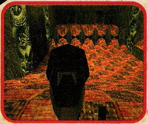
2 - Taking the long route, look for a hut. Backflip over the sloped rock and shimmy over. You'll find ammo and a large medi-pack.

3 - Taking the tough route, jump through the waterfall after you have opened up the gate. Grab the MP5 ammo.

TEMPLE OF PUNA

- The temple starts with two blowdart-firing natives on the right, with a two more appearing as you continue to the top of the stairs.

- The next puzzle is a pain. Slide down into the room with the rolling blades and head for one of the four faces. As you face the wall, stand a little to the left of the face and hope that you are between the blades. Each face has a switch on it that needs to be pushed. Once you have switched two of them on one side of the room, you need to cross to the other side. Find a safe line to follow across and jump over the narrow portion of the blades when they get close. Push the remaining switches to open the door.

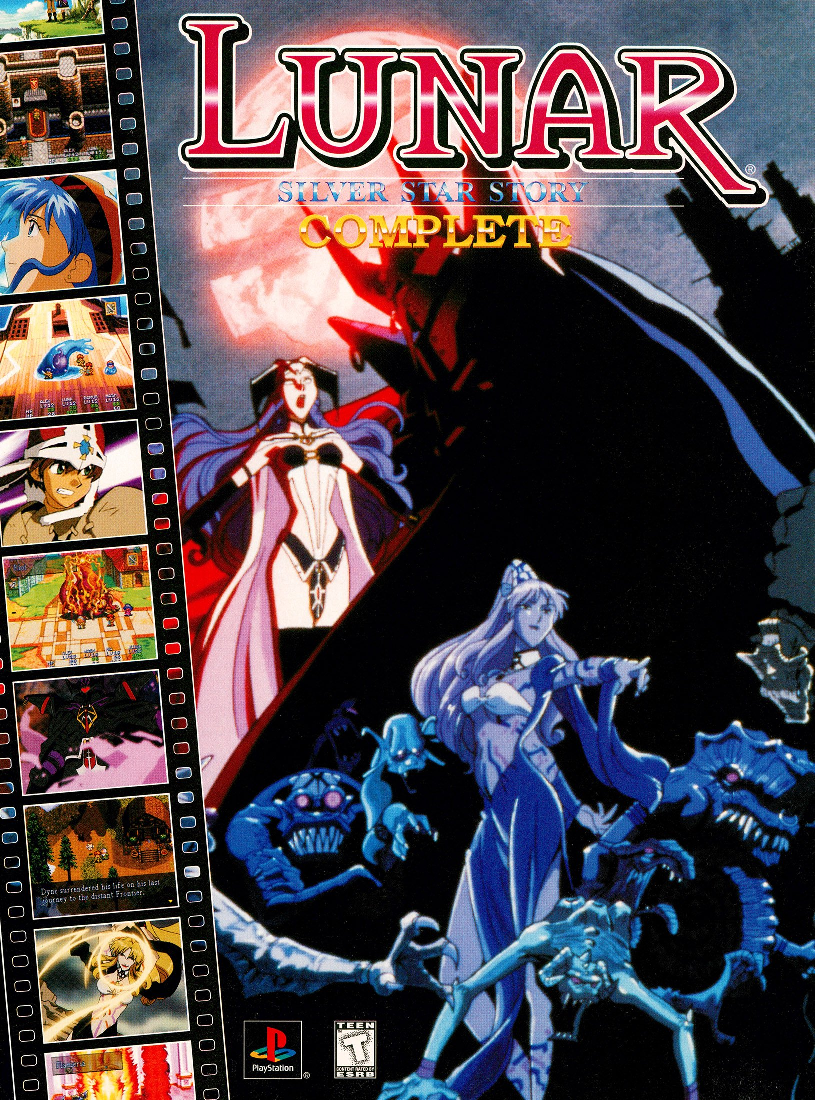


- When you drop down, pull the block out of the wall to stop the lowering spikes. Throw the switches to open the door. Drop down the hole and you will be in a room with the huge boulder poised at the top of a ramp. Pull the switch and be prepared to run. The first boulder won't move until you cross the light patch on the floor. The room you run into is the one at the beginning of the level with another boulder. This one is already in motion and you must make a right turn to escape it. Run down the center of the room to avoid the breakaway floor.

- Three more natives await your return to the entry point of the level. Defeat them and enter the door to the right to face the boss. The key to beating him is to keep side flipping to avoid his lightning. The only catch is you have to hit him while he is shooting at you; otherwise he'll block your shots. This means you must stand still for half a second so he'll attack. Pause for too long and you're fried. After hitting him a few times he will release a lizardman. The most important thing to remember here is to quickly get your bearings once the lizardman is dead. There is little time before he starts firing at you again. You will need to repeat this several times to final beat him and get the Ora Dagger.

TEMPLE OF PUNA SECRET

1 - Go back up the stairs and climb them until you are on the last flight. Turn toward the far wall and jump and hang just below the line of faces. Shimmy left to the secret area, housing a cache of ammo and health.


LUNAR®
SILVER STAR STORY
COMPLETE
PlayStation®
TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Dyne surrendered his life on his last journey to the distant Frontier.

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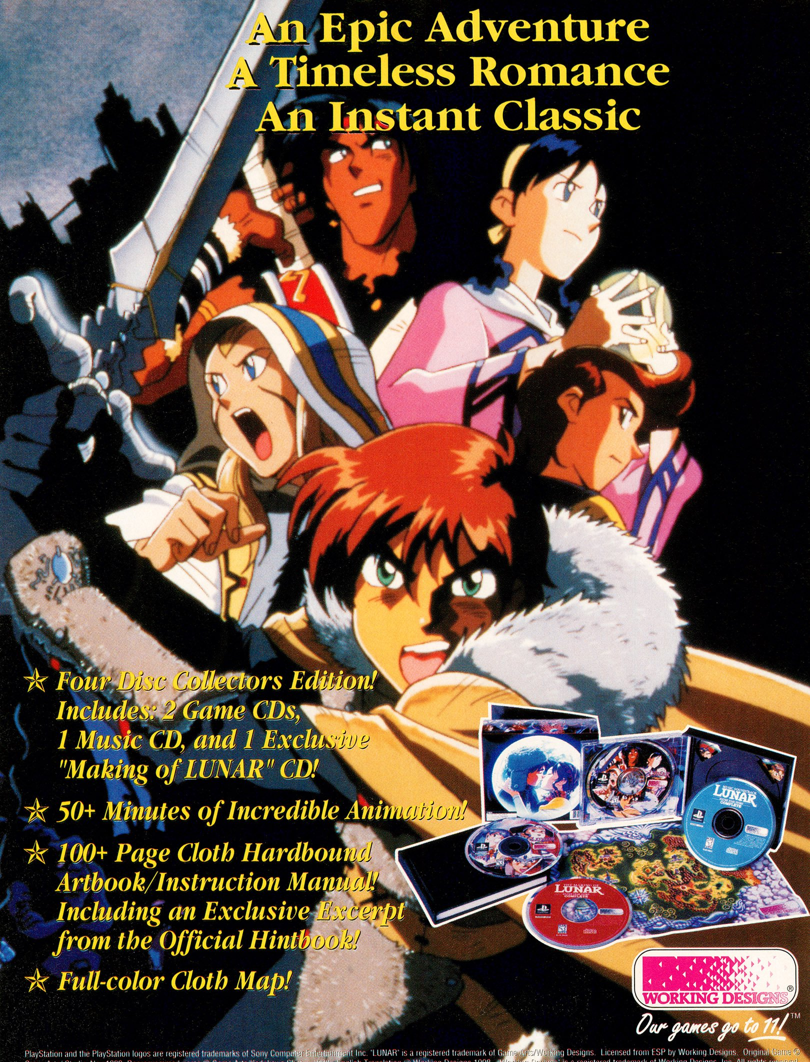
A Timeless Romance
An Instant Classic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– I'm not anorexic, I'm just naturally thin...like that Ally McBeal lady.

Mmm, mmm, that is a tasty burger...

Star Wars

It was yesterday, as of this writing, that the *The Phantom Menace* trailer was first unveiled. Being the *Star Wars* geeks we are, we all piled into the local theater to get our first glimpse of the new series, and boy, were we impressed. The inspiration for both of these "Sneak Preview" figures were seen in the trailer; the STAP (left) is a repulsorlift patrol vehicle operated by a single battle droid, and is available in stores now, while Mace Windu (right), a senior member of the Jedi Council, is only available by mail order. To order, you'll need to submit six proofs of purchase from any Kenner *Star Wars* basic figure and a check or money order for $2.99. You'll find a sticker with all the details on any *Star Wars* figure purchased within the specified time.

Kenner *STAP: $14.99, Mace: $2.99*

⚙⚙⚙⚙⚙

This lavender magical cape makes me feel so gay and merry!

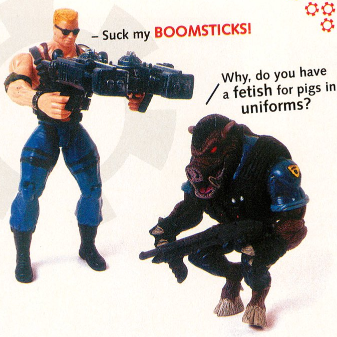
I am the Warrior

Just in time for the new Xena PlayStation game is the second series of the toy line. Not to be confused with the cruddy toy line that had Hercules figures it, the new Xena series of toys look just like their TV counterparts and have some great accessories. The first line includes two versions of Xena, her nemesis Calisto and her good, good friend Gabriel. The new batch has Xena in a harem outfit and perhaps one of the most-anticipated figures yet, Bruce Cambell (*Evil Dead 2, Army of Darkness,* etc.), who plays Autonicous, King of Thieves on the TV series. Don't be embarrassed. Go get these figures now!

Toy Biz *$7.95 each*

⚙⚙⚙⚙

✪✪✪✪✪ **5G No question, this should be in your home**
✪✪✪✪ **4G Recommended, very cool**
✪✪✪ **3G Pretty good, check it out**
✪✪ **2G Below average**
✪ **1G Very lame**


– Suck my BOOMSTICKS!
Why, do you have a fetish for pigs in uniforms?

Duke Nukem

Nothing says, "I'm a badass, baby" like a Duke Nukem figure standing on your desk, nightstand or monitor. These are posable, solid figures that come complete with appropriate weapons. And hey, a careful scratch job will easily change the "R" in the pig-cop's LARD emblem to a "P"—not that we're endorsing that or anything. One of the highlights of this line is the huge Octabrain.

Resaurus *$ N/A*

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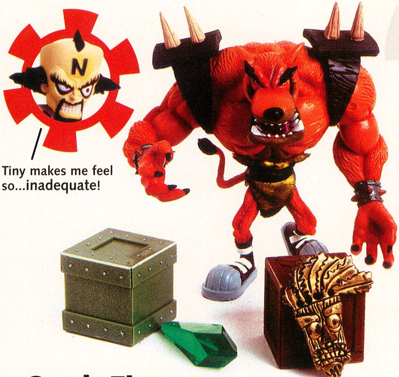
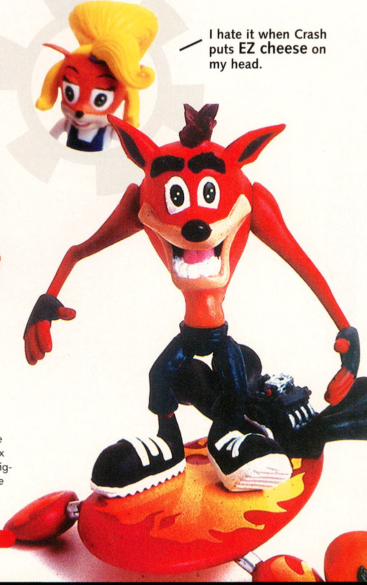

Tiny makes me feel so...inadequate!


I hate it when Crash puts EZ cheese on my head.

Crash Figures

Resaurus, creators of the Duke Nukem figures, have unleashed a new line based on the Crash Bandicoot series. Each figure includes a few extras; Coco, for example, has her trademark laptop with her, while one Crash figure includes a gold Aku Aku mask.

Especially impressive is the massive Tiny figure, which stands a good six inches tall. Other than the Cortex figure, which looks a bit goofy, they're very well-done likenesses.

Resaurus *$ N/A*

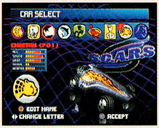
✪✪✪✪

S.C.A.R.S.

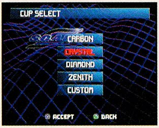
Cups, Cars and Modes

On the Title Screen, press Start. On the Player Select Screen, choose your number of players. On the Game Select Screen, highlight and choose the Options. On the Options Screen, choose Settings. Now move down and highlight the "Password" option and enter one of the codes as shown for various results:

GLASSX - Activates the Crystal Cup.
ROCKYY - Activates the Diamond Cup.
ZDPEAK - Activates the Zenith Cup.
XPERTS - Activates the Challenge Mode.
DESERT - Activates the Scorpion Car.
RATTLE - Activates the Cobra Car.
RUNNER - Activates the Cheetah Car.
MYSTER - Activates the Panther Car.
ALLVID - Activates the Codes.



Choose from four of the hidden cars, including the Cheetah Car.

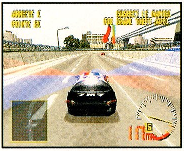


Access the various Cup races by entering the passwords.

Test Drive 5

Bonus Cars and Cop Chase Mode

From the Main Menu, choose Quick Race or under the Full Race option, choose the Drag Race and get a good time that will earn you a high score. Once you finish the race, exit the game and choose "Quit." On the High Score Screen, enter your name as NOLIFE. This will get you three bonus cars: Chris's Beast, Pitbull Special and Behold the Mighty Maul! To enable the Cop Chase, get a good time and on the High Score Screen, enter the name VRSIX. Now go back to the Main Menu and choose Full Race. On the Select Race Type Screen, choose the Cop Chase option. Now you can choose from four different types of police cars. In this mode, your object is to arrest as many lawbreakers as possible while gaining points along the way. Press the R2 button to use your siren, and disable your enemies by running into them.



The Pitbull Special is just one of the hidden cars you can drive.

Duke Nukem: Time to Kill

Appearance and Cheat Codes

Big Heads, Little Heads:
To change Duke and the enemies' appearances, pause the game and enter one of these codes:

Big Head Duke - R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1 R1, R1, R1, Up
Tiny Head Duke - R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, Down
Big Head Enemies - R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, Left
Note: If you have Big Head Duke and want it to be Tiny Head, then just enter the Big Head Code again. Duke's head will shrink back to normal and you can put in the Tiny Head code. Otherwise it won't work. Do the same for Tiny to Big.

Cheat Codes

Pause the game and enter these codes at a slow but even pace. If you enter them too fast they might not work.

Infinite Ammo - Left, Right, Left, Right, Select, Left, Right, Left, Right, Select
All Weapons - L1, L2, Up, L1, L2, Down, R1, Right, R2, Left
All Inventory - R1 x 5, L2 x 5
All Keys - Up, Right, Up, Left, Down, Up, Right, Left, Right, Down
Invisible - L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1
Double Damage - L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2, L2, R2
Temporary Invulnerability - R1, L2, L1, L2, R1, L1, R1, L2, L1, L2
Super Weapons - Right, Right, Left, Right, Right, Left, Right, Right, Left, Select

Level Select

While playing, pause the game and press Down nine times and then press Up and it should say Level Select. Now quit the game and on the Main Menu you will see a new option that says "Time To Kill." Select it and press Right or Left to choose the level you want to go to. Press X to start playing.

BIG HEAD DUKE
RESUME
LOAD
OPTIONS
QUIT

Give Duke a huge head to match his inflated ego.

WEAPONS
INVENTORY

Look at all those weapons. Better find something to kill.

The Unholy War

Secret Characters, Battlefields and Maps

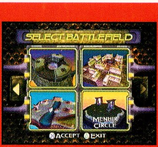
There are only three cheats in the Unholy War, all of which use the same code, though in different places.

The code is as follows:
Press the Circle button and the Square button simultaneously. Press the Select button four times. Press the Start button three times. Press the Square button two times. Press the Circle button once. Press the Circle button and the Square button simultaneously again.

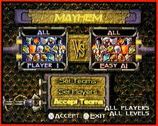
To unlock Secret Characters, highlight "Set Teams" on the Mayhem Selection Screen and perform the code.

To unlock Secret Battlefields, highlight "Accept Teams" on the Mayhem Selection screen and perform the code.

To unlock all one-player Strategy Maps, highlight "Set War" on the Strategy Selection Screen and perform the code.



Unlock Secret Battlefields from the Mayhem Selection Screen.



Enter the code to play as all of the hidden characters.

The Fifth Element

Cheat Menu

On the Main Menu Screen, press L1, L2, R2, R1, Select. You will hear a sound. Then choose "New Game" and the Cheat Menu will be displayed. Now you can choose from plenty of options such as your beginning level, shields, all weapons, objects and more!

Test Drive: Off-Road 2

Hidden Vehicles

At the Transmission Selection Screen (both for Single Race and World Tour), hold Select and enter the following button sequences:
L1, Up, L2, Down, Down, L2, L2, R2 = Drive as a school bus.
R2, L2, L2, Down, Down, L2, L2, R1 = Drive as an ice cream truck.

NHL 99

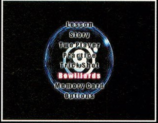
Cheat Codes

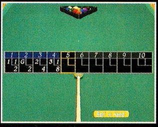
Enter these codes at the Password Screen.
BIGBIG - All the players are big.
BRAINY - All players have big heads.
EAEAO - Activates the EA Blades Team.

Pool Hustler

Hidden Bowlliard Mode

This trick will reveal the hidden "Bowlliard" Mode. At the Title Screen, press Up, Up, Down, Triangle, Triangle, X, X, Left, Right, Square, Circle. Now go to the Main Menu Screen and you will see a new option in the middle called Bowlliard, which combines the game of bowling and billiards.





Play a crazy game of "Bowlliards" with this code.

Football Frenzy

Madden NFL 99

Cheat Codes

At the Main Menu Screen, move down, highlight and access the "Code Entry" option. On the Code Entry Screen, press X on New Code and enter any of these codes for the results shown:

New Teams

BESTNFC - All-Stars NFC
AFCBEST - All-Stars AFC
BOOM - Madden 98 Team
IMTHEMAN - Stats leaders
PEACELOVE - All '60s team
BELLBOTTOMS - All '70s team
HEREANDNOW - All '90s team
TURKEYLEG - Madden All-Time Greats
THROWBACK - 75th anniversary team
GEARGUYS - NFL equipment team
WELCOMEBACK - '99 Cleveland Browns
INTHEGAME - EA Sports Team

Secret Stadiums

EA STADIUM - EA Sports
DOGPOUND99 - Cleveland
THEHOGS - RFK Stadium, Washington, D.C.
NOTAFISH - Old Miami
SOMBRERO - Old Tampa
FOR RENT - Astrodome
OURHOUSE - Tiburon
STICKEM - Original Oakland

NFL GameDay 99

Easter Eggs

From the Main Menu Screen, highlight and access the Options. On the Options Menu, highlight and access the Easter Eggs option. Now choose to add and put in any of the codes as shown:

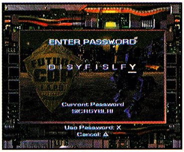
CREDITS - Shows game's credits
EVEN TEAMS - Both teams are evenly matched.
BIG BALLS - Huge football
HAMSTRUNG - Blow a hamstring after using speed burst.
WEAK - Bad coverage
BLINDERS - No penalties
BIG HITS - Harder tackles
STEEL LEG - Kick longer field goals
STICKEM - Tighter coverage
ITS IN THE FPS - Frame-rate changes
PRIME TIME - More celebrations
TELE TUMMY - Have TV on players' chests
DAVIS - Better running
ROCKET MAN - Longer dives
BOBO - Players' last names are all Bobo.
PRESIDENTS - Players' last names are all ex-presidents.
EURO LEAGUE - Players' last names are all European.
SPORTS - Players' last names are all 989 Sports personnel.
RED ZONE - Players' last names are all Red Zone personnel.
HOOPS - Players' last names are all basketball players.
FLEA CIRCUS - Tiny players
GRUDGE MATCH - Different-colored field and no goal posts
PLAYING CARDS - Flat 2D players like cards
FLAT LAND - Flat players
BUNYON - Short, stocky players
POP WARNER - Skinny, kidlike players

Future Cop: L.A.P.D.

General Password Cheats

DISYFISLFY - All Crime War and Precinct Assault missions completed.
DITIFISLFL - All Crime War and Precinct Assault missions locked completed.
DYPYFASRHR - All Crime War and Precinct Assault missions completed. All Easter Egg weapons.
SIFRGYBERR - No Crime War or Precinct Assault missions completed. Invincibility allowed.
SYMRGOBRRL - No Crime War or Precinct Assault missions completed. All Easter Egg weapons.
DYSIFASRHY - All Crime War and Precinct Assault missions locked completed. All Easter Egg weapons.
DYTIFASUHL - All Crime War and Precinct Assault missions locked completed. All Easter Egg Weapons. Invincibility allowed.

(Please note that certain conditions, once set, are not cleared by passwords. These conditions are: All Crime War and Precinct Assault missions locked completed. All Easter Egg weapons. Invincibility allowed.)



In-Game Cheat Codes

These passwords have to be entered while the Adjust SFX Volume entry is selected in the MAP Menu. Once the password has be typed, you have to QUIT (validate YES). If the password is valid, the game won't quit (except for the quit successfully code). Most of these passwords will affect the player who actually typed it:

Reload shield - Square, Select, Circle, X.

Quit a crime war mission successfully - Square, Circle, Square, Circle, X, Select, X, Select.

Blue player = Black - Square, Select, Circle, X, X, Circle, Select, Square
Reload weapon 0 - Square, Circle, Select, X, Select, X, Circle, Square
Reload weapon 1 - Circle, X, Select, Square, Circle, X, Select, Square
Reload weapon 2 - Square, Select, Square, Circle, Square, Select, X
Power up weapon 0 - Circle, Circle, Circle, X, X, X, Circle, Select
Power up weapon 1 - Square, Square, Square, Circle, X, Circle, X
Power up weapon 2 - Square, Circle, Square, Select, X, Square, Circle
Add 200 points to the player (in Precinct Assault mission) - Circle, Square, Circle, X, Select, Square, X
Invincible (allows zone bypass) - Circle, Circle, Select, Select, Circle, X, Square
Walker can superjump (allows zone bypass) - Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Square, Square, X, Select, Square, X, Select, Circle
Set the maximum shield to the max (32767) and reshield (might allow zone bypass) - X, X, Select, Circle, Circle, Select, Square, Square, Select

Secret Super Power-up

Press the Action button 10 times in lower-left corner of plaza.
Press the Action button 10 times in lower-right corner of plaza.
Ta-daaaa super reloader powers you up!

C: The Contra Adventure

Many Cheat Codes

Input the combinations on the Main Menu Screen.

Level Select - Left, Up, Right, Square, Square, Triangle, Triangle, Down.
Unlimited Lives - Up, Right, Square, Triangle, Right, Left, Square, Triangle.
Unlimited Super Bombs - Square, Square, Right, Down, Down, Left, Square, Triangle.
Super Machine Gun - Right, Right, Square, Triangle, Right, Left, Down, Down.
Movie Player - Triangle, Triangle, Down, Square, Up, Up, Left, Triangle.

C
MAIN MENU
START GAME
OPTIONS
LOAD GAME
BASIC TRAINING
HELP

Football Frenzy

NFL GameDay 99 (cont.)

Easter Eggs

SLIDESHOW - After the game, see all the cheerleaders.
HOT SHOT - Faster passes
GD CHALLENGE - Harder CPU
CPU SCORES - Better CPU offense
CPU STUFFS - Better CPU defense
MIND READER - CPU knows what formations to use on your play.
COFFEE BREAK - Faster game speed
SWIMMERS - Better swim move
PUPPETS - Players have strings attached to them.
STAMINA - No fatigue

NFL Blitz

Blitz Cheats

These codes worked on the arcade, and now they also work for the PlayStation version! Enter the following codes during the Vs. Screen. Some codes may not work in one-player games and some two-player codes may require both players to do the code.

For No CPU Assist press: Jump (1x), Pass (2x) and pad Down. (Note: Only works in Two-player Mode.)
To Show More Field press: Jump (2x), Pass (1x) and pad Right.
For Fog On press: Jump (3x) and pad Down.
For Fast Turbo Running press: Jump (3x), Pass (2x) and pad Left.
For Huge Head press: Jump (4x) and pad Up.
For Thick Fog press: Jump (4x), Pass (1x) and pad Down.
For Super Blitzing press: Jump (4x), Pass (5x) and pad Up.
For Big Ball press: Jump (5x) and pad Right.
To Hide Receiver Name press: Turbo (1x), Pass (2x) and pad Right.
For Tournament Mode press: Turbo (1x), Jump (1x), Pass (1x) and pad Down.
For Random Play Choice press: Turbo (1x), Jump (1x), Pass (5x) and pad Left.
For Super Field Goals press: Turbo (1x), Jump (2x), Pass (3x) and pad Left.
For Big Players press: Turbo (1x), Jump (4x), Pass (1x) and pad Right.

NFL Xtreme

Player Alterations

From the Main Menu Screen, choose the Rosters Option. In the Rosters Screen, choose "CreateFreeAgent." On the CreateFreeAgent Menu, enter the following first and last names for the results as shown:

GEORGE GIRAFFE - The quarterback has a neck like a giraffe.
LAMEBOY LENNY - All players walk around like they are lame.
BIGHEAD BOBBY - All players have huge heads.
MONKEY MICKY - All players have huge arms.
TINY TOM - All players are tiny.

You don't have to sign them on a team. Just leave them in the free-agent pool. Remember, you can change their stats so they don't have 40 of everything. Also, you can mix and match codes together for different results!

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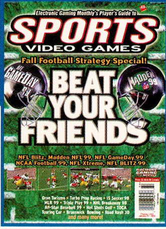
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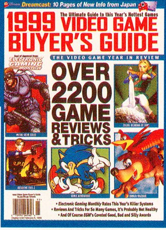
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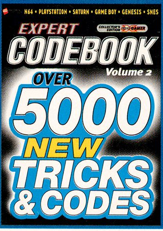
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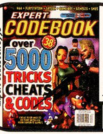

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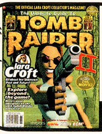

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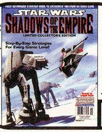

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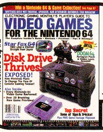

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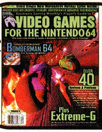

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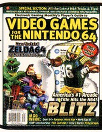

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Silent Hill

Players	1	**Developer**	Konami
Availability	February	**Publisher**	Konami
Analog Controller	Yes	**Genre**	Adventure

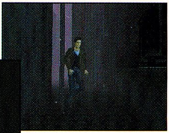
✕	Action/Fire/Kick
○	Turn Handy Light ON/OFF
□	Run
△	Use Map
L1	Step Left
L2	Change View
R1	Step Right
R2	Prepare Weapon

The Clock Tower

To enter the tower you will need to locate both the Gold and Silver Medallions.

Oh yes, here's the one you've been waiting for. Ever since you saw the video on last month's *OPM* disc you couldn't wait to get your grubby little mitts on this one, could you? Well here it is, the incredible (and surprisingly long) playable Silent Hill demo. Turn up the sound, turn off the lights and press Start...

There are two scenes to choose from: The first is from the start of the game and introduces the creepy abandoned town of Silent Hill—play it first to get accustomed to the controls and awesome moving camera. The second is a bit more involved; apparently the Midwich Elementary School is now only admitting deformed creatures and unspeakable evil. Be careful, the place is crawling with knife-wielding zombie babies and oversized cockroaches. Further exploration of the school will uncover several puzzles you need to solve, all while trying to avoid the ever-present nasties coursing through the halls, with only your flashlight to guide you. Be afraid...be *very* afraid...

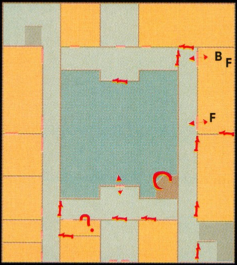


Explore the deserted town in search of your missing daughter and hope that she's all you find.

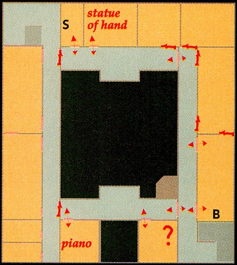
Silent Hill Strategy

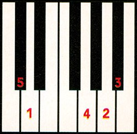
While Scene One of the demo is straightforward, Scene Two requires you to be more resourceful. From where you enter the elementary school, exit through the double doors leading to the courtyard. Obtaining the two medallions to unlock the door to the tower here is your first goal. Follow the map to the room containing the sulfuric acid. Next door you'll find the statue of a hand grasping the Gold medallion. Use the acid to dissolve the hand and get the "Golden Sun." Place the medallion in the tower to release the locked top to the piano. Play the keys of the piano in the order diagrammed below to release the Silver medallion. Insert it into the slot marked "Silver Moon" to enter the tower. You emerge into an evil mirror image of the school you just left (use the maps to the left). Make your way to the room with the rattling locker to find the key to the lobby doors. Simple enough? It would be wise to use your handgun sparingly, as there are quite a few zombie babies to bypass. The pipe is fairly effective to deal with them, but only when they are alone. Groups of these sinister little creatures are best dealt with by using the gun. That doesn't mean it will be a walk in the park, though. It is best to try to isolate one of them at a time, otherwise a small group can overpower you. If worse comes to worse, there is no embarrassment in hitting the Reset button. Honest.

1st Floor



2nd Floor

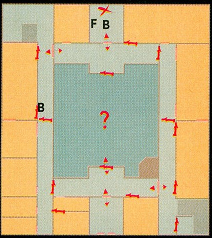




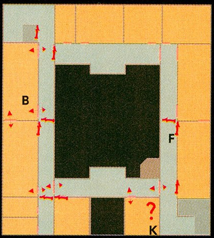
MAP KEY
- **B - Handgun Bullets**
- **F - First-aid Kit**
- **S - Sulfuric Acid**
- **K - Lobby's Key**

While you may find killing the denizens roaming the halls of this elementary school disturbing, it actually becomes quite enjoyable. Shoot the zombie babies four times and then quickly stomp on them before they can regain their senses.

1st Floor



2nd Floor



Moto Racer 2

Players	1-2	**Developer**	Dolphine
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	Electronic Arts
Analog Controller	Yes	**Genre**	Racing

✕	Accelerate
○	Cycle Views
□	Brake
△	Look Behind
L1	Not Used
L2	Turbo Wheelie
R1	Not Used
R2	Turbo Wheelie

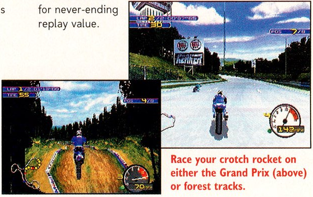
Makin' Tracks

You can store up to 120 home-made tracks onto a memory card! You'll be racing for a long, long time.

The first Moto Racer game was one of the better (if only one of a few) motorcycle racing games available for the PlayStation. Now Electronic Arts is releasing a sequel and we've got a nice playable demo of it—so hop on your bike and try out two of the whopping 32 courses in the game.

In addition to the huge amount of tracks, the full version of the game will feature a two-player split-screen mode to race against a friend. And if you're looking for a bit of variety in gameplay, you can choose from either an Arcade Mode for a quick action-packed race or the more realistic Simulation Mode.

If all those features aren't enough, the full version also includes a track editor. It's kinda like an advanced version of Nintendo's classic game Excitebike. In this mode, you can create all sorts of tracks for never-ending replay value.



Race your crotch rocket on either the Grand Prix (above) or forest tracks.

Brave Fencer Musashi

Players	1	**Developer**	Square
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	Square EA
Analog Controller	Yes	**Genre**	Action/RPG

✕	Jump/Select
○	Use/Advance Text
□	Action
△	Attack
L1	Walk Slowly
L2	Not Used
R1	Defend
R2	Not Used

Getting Steamed

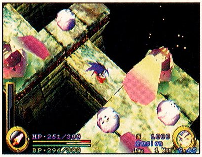
When the Steam Knight starts jumping around, he's gonna try to land on you. Run to an open area when he's in the air, and then dodge as he's about to land.

Two months ago, we brought you a video demo of Square's new action/RPG, and now we got the real goods. The new Musashi demo lets you play three different sections from the game.

The first has you running away from a giant, rolling stone face. This is much like the running-in-the-screen scenes from the Crash Bandicoot games—no problem, right? From there, you'll fight the first boss of the game, Steam Knight.

The intermediate level has you roaming the countryside trying to gather a mess of logs. Basically you need to find trees and cut them down. Can you find them all?

For the final stage, you need to escape a trap-filled dungeon. Grab the bowling power from one of the ball-spitting plants to make it past those groups of guards who get in your way. Bowling, in an RPG? What's next? Final Fantasy badminton?



Absorb the bowling ability from these odd plants to escape.

Apocalypse

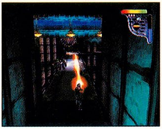
Players	1	**Developer**	NeverSoft
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	Activision
Analog Controller	Yes	**Genre**	Action

✕	Fire (backward)
○	Fire (right)
□	Fire (left)
△	Fire (forward)
L1	Crouch/Roll
L2	Change Weapon
R1	Jump
R2	Smart Bomb

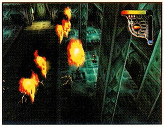
More Power To Ya

When you see a bunch of enemies on a faraway platform, take the time to pick them all off. You'll be rewarded with a health power-up.

It's been a long time coming, but the Apocalypse is finally upon us. This game has been retooled and delayed so many times that some began to doubt it would ever be released. But finally it's here and now you have a chance to play it for yourself.



If case you haven't heard, Apocalypse stars Bruce Willis as Trey Kincaid, a man who's out to save the world by blowing up damn near everything in sight. (Sounds like one of Bruce's movies, eh?) This demo takes you through the first level for a taste of all the destructive action.



Anybody got a light? Setting the escaping prisoners aflame is definitely the highlight of this demo.

The gameplay is roughly a combination of ASC's PlayStation title One and the arcade classic Robotron. Movement and shooting are controlled independently, so you can fire in any direction as you run around; if you've got a Dual Shock, you'll definitely want to use the analog pads for that true arcade feel.

T'ai Fu

Players	1	**Developer**	Dreamworks
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	Activision
Analog Controller	Yes	**Genre**	Adventure

✕	Jump
○	Grab/Throw
□	Strike
△	Block/Chi
L1	Chi Blast
L2	Not Used
R1	Duck
R2	Not Used

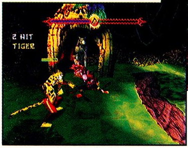
Stick in the Mud

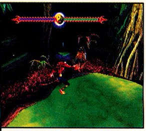
Watch out for the pools of mud dotting the landscape. If you step into them, it's just a matter of time before you get dragged under the surface.

Like Musashi, you might remember seeing video of T'ai Fu on the *OPM* disc a few months back, but now we're happy to give you a fully playable version of this upcoming adventure/fighter.

In this demo, you get to climb into the sweaty, matted fur of one badass tiger, T'ai, and take on a legion of evil felines and snakes who aren't strangers to gettin' into a tussle now and again themselves. Being a true martial artist, T'ai has plenty of killer moves and combos up his hairy sleeve—you'll need to master them all if you expect to win.

Building up your chi energy allows you unleash a world of hurt: You can launch fireballs, turn your opponents into stone or even send out a massive energy blast and blow away everyone around you. Once you fight your way to the giant golden ring, you've completed the demo. Sit back and relax in a nice tick bath.

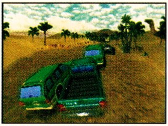




Look out for the quicksand and various other animals with Bruce Lee complexes.

Test Drive: Off-Road 2

Players	1	**Developer**	Accolade
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	Accolade
Analog Controller	Yes	**Genre**	Racing

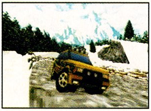


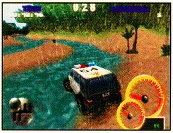
If any of the other cars get in your way, you can give them a friendly little nudge to let 'em know you mean business.

Racing games have been popular since the early days of video games, and the Test Drive series has been around in some form or another for almost just as long. Now the latest version comes to the PlayStation in the form of Test Drive: Off-Road 2.

The sequel boasts a selection of 20 real-life vehicles including a Hummer (so you can get behind the wheel and pretend you're Schwarzenegger driving to work). All the cars are also upgradable, so you can swap out parts and improve their performance and handling. And you're going to need to upgrade these suckers—take a look at all the abuse they're gonna suffer with the bumps and huge jumps in this game. Your shock absorbers will be begging for mercy!

Expect 12 of these nasty courses in the final version, set in six locations across the world. As you race, you'll even be able to groove to the sounds of such bands as Fear Factory and Gravity Kills.



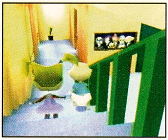


Even the cops can't resist a little off-roadin' action.

Rugrats

Players	1	**Developer**	n-Space
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	THQ
Analog Controller	Yes	**Genre**	Action

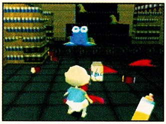
When you're just two-feet tall, getting down the stairs can be an adventure in itself (especially with a full diaper).



You can hardly turn around nowadays without running into some sort of Rugrats merchandise. With a hit TV show, all kinds of toys and even a movie on the way, these little tykes are just about everywhere already, so why not a video game?

Chucky, Tommy and all their friends are here, complete with their familiar voices. They're looking good in full 3D polygons. The game, subtitled Search for Reptar, follows the kids on their adventures to find a lost toy. Plenty of cinemas are used to move the story along, plus there are several minigames like the pie toss and miniature golf to keep the player involved. If it all sounds rather simple, that's because it's meant to be; Rugrats is designed with the main audience of the TV show (young kids) in mind. Of course, like the TV show, that doesn't mean grownups can't like it too!

Aiiiigh! Lobsters! Just one of the many minigames coming in Rugrats.



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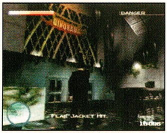
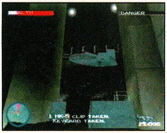
Syphon Filter

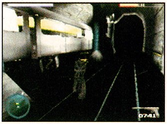
Players	1	**Developer**	Idelic
Availability	February	**Publisher**	989 Studios
Analog Controller	Yes	**Genre**	Action

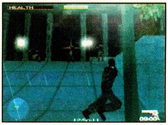




Gabe takes these baddies for a little plane ride—right smack into the ground!

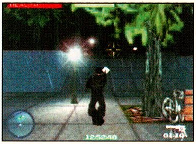
With 3D action/adventure games like Metal Gear Solid and Tomb Raider III burning up the sales charts, it's no surprise to see similar games coming for the PlayStation. Take Syphon Filter, for example. Currently being worked on by 989 Studios, the company behind Twisted Metal III and NFL GameDay 99, Syphon Filter mixes parts of those two big names for what could turn out to be one explosive package.





This video demo gives you a small sampling of the fast action and big thrills that await you in the full game. You can see our hero Gabe (he's the chap running around shooting everyone) using just a few of his large variety of moves and arsenal of weaponry. Check out the night vision on that sniper rifle! Awesome!

When you take control of Gabe in the full version, we're told you'll be able to duck, roll and just about anything else, all while firing away at the baddies. As you'll notice in the demo, you can even manipulate your environment to take out the enemies (i.e., drop a big ol' plane on 'em).

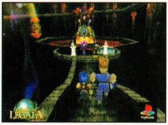


A sitting duck in the open, our hero has to dive and roll to safety.

Legend of Legaia

Players	1	**Developer**	SCEI
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	SCEA
Analog Controller	Yes	**Genre**	RPG

Looks like the main character and a friend are in a big hurry to get somewhere?

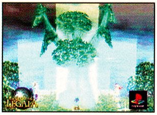


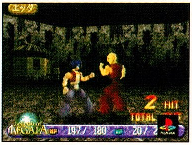
The makers of Wild Arms have returned with a brand-new RPG that looks to be even better than their previous effort. Legend of Legaia is an interesting new game that takes the standard RPG setup and twists it just a bit.

As you can see from this demo, the game takes place in a weird, biomechanical world, fully 3D in both backgrounds and characters. One original feature is that the standard fighting tools of the RPG (swords, shields and the like) have been dropped in favor of various martial arts techniques. Instead of buying new weapons constantly, players increase their hand-to-hand fighting skills. This feature and the surreal settings and cool details of this new world you can already see in the short teaser demo (like that giant transport that looks and moves like a bug) make this one to watch.

The best part is, even though it was just released in Japan last month, Legaia is already being translated for the U.S.! Hallelujah! If only all Japanese RPGs could be brought over so quickly!

Even in the quick cuts of the demo you can see some nice lighting effects.





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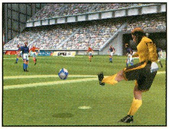
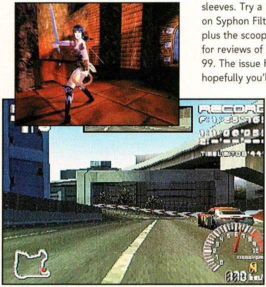


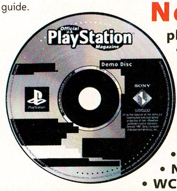


And The Winner Is...

Now that all of 1998's games have been released, it's time for the inevitable. Don't complain, you knew it was coming. That's right, prepare yourself for *OPM*'s annual awards for the best and worst games of 1998. To hell with the Oscars, this is the event you've been waiting for. If you're lucky, there might even be a guest appearance by Mr. Domino.

Even if you're not in the mood for fancy-schmancy awards ceremonies, the February issue of *OPM* is just teeming with loads of great games. Think we're full of it? Guess again. Speeding right around the corner is our massive coverage of the PlayStation's next, best racing game, R4: Ridge Racer Type 4. Find out how it will utilize the PocketStation and what kinds of other goodies will come packed in Namco's sure-fire hit.

If that's still not enough, you're trying to make life hard on us, but we still have more tricks up our sleeves. Try a preview of NCAA Final Four, more info on Syphon Filter, March Madness 99 and Contender plus the scoop on Xena: Warrior Princess. Also look for reviews of Clock Tower II, Bust-A-Move 4 and FIFA 99. The issue hits newsstands in mid-January, so hopefully you'll be far enough in the game to use the second part of our in-depth Tomb Raider III strategy guide.



If you love sports, you'll definitely want our next issue. It comes packed with tons of playable 989 Sports games in addition to a video of Gex 3. Groovy, baby!

Check Out Our Next Demo Disc!

playables

- Cool Boarders 3
- Destrega
- Monkey Hero
- NFL GameDay 99
- NHL FaceOff 99
- Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus
- ODT
- Twisted Metal III

non-playables

- Gex 3
- Jackie Chan's Stuntmaster
- NCAA Final Four
- Shadow Madness
- WCW/nWo

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

Zombies on the brain! *EGM* gets face to face with writer/producer George Romero in the long-awaited interview about his upcoming production.

So many dinosaurs, so little time. The Review Crew takes a stab at the multiplayer capable Turok 2: Seeds of Evil. Could it possibly be better than the first?

Our February issue lets readers stand up and voice their opinions with our Readers' Choice awards. Tell us how you feel the 1998 titles stacked up to your expectations.

Is it a coincidence our new platinum award looks like a triforce? The question is: Will Zelda be sporting one or just weeping by the wayside next month? Also, free cheese for everyone.

On sale Jan. 12

It's already presold about a quadzillion copies, but should readers believe the hype? Will Zelda stand up to the Review Crew standards? It's just a hunch but we say YES! Stay tuned kids.

EXPERT GAMER

Besides huge guides on Tomb Raider III and Soul Reaver, we'll spill a few more Zelda secrets.

You're gonna love *Expert Gamer*'s February issue. First, we'll complete the Tomb Raider III guide with more strategy, detailed maps and secrets. Next, *XG*'s Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver coverage will point out helpful tips and must-know facts in order for you to survive. Plus, the Worm is back in Earthworm Jim 64, and we provide the best advice on how to stop your foes and win the game. And don't forget to check out our wrap-up coverage on Zelda 64, containing lots of cool secrets.

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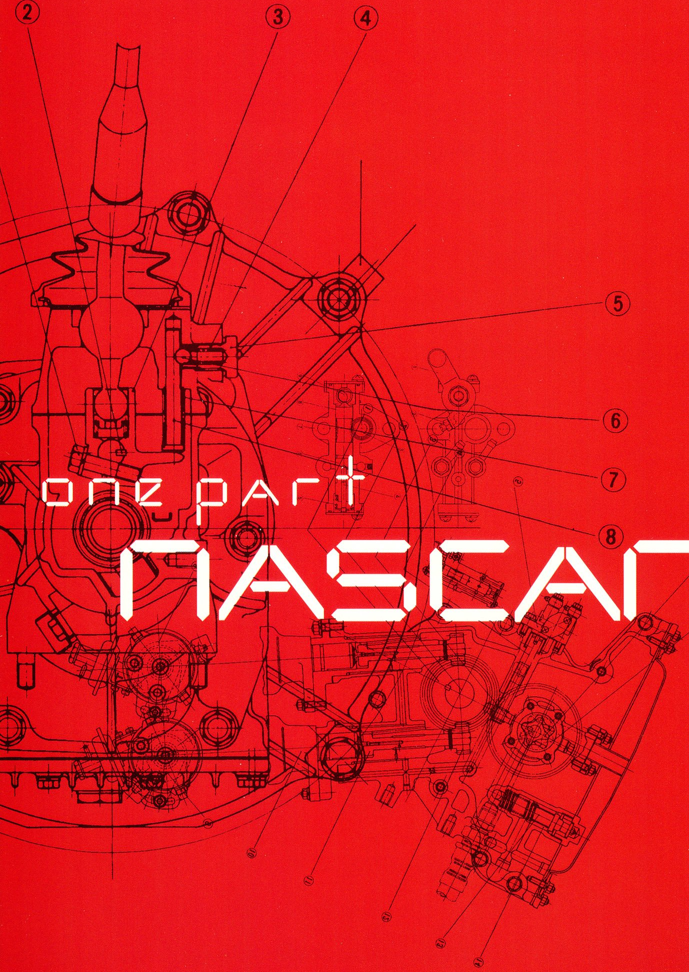

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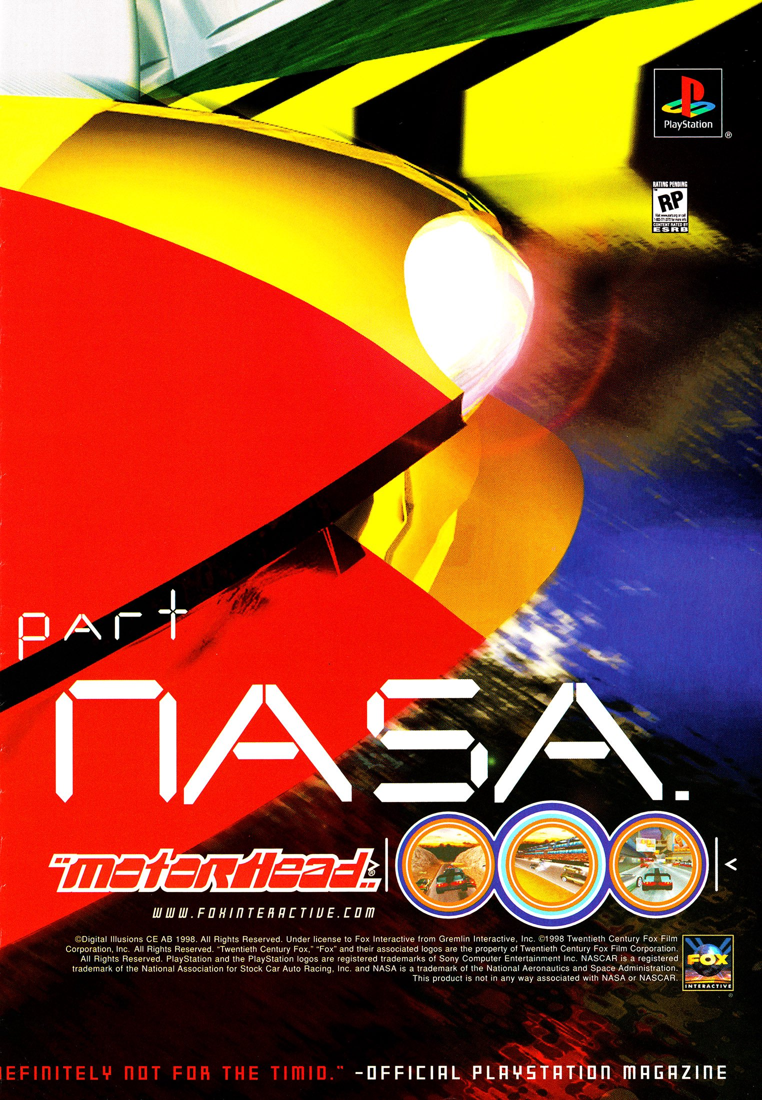
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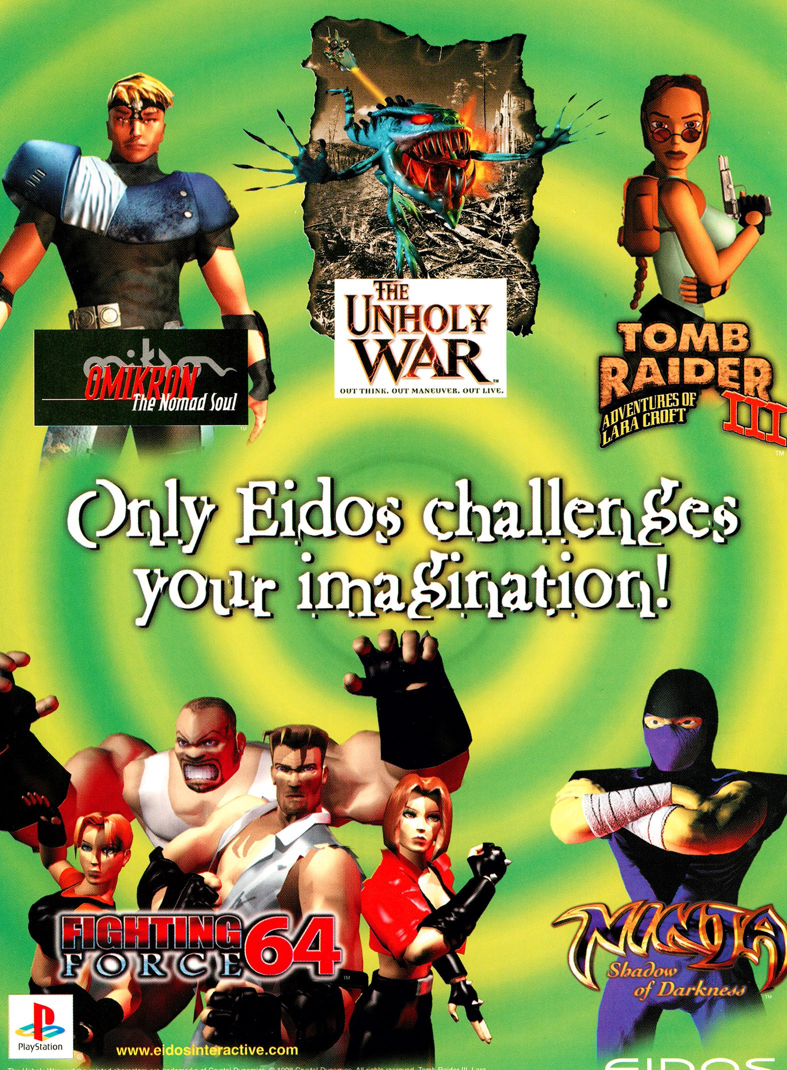
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